



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**ST MARTIN'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL
INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Martin's Preparatory School

Full Name of School	St Martin's Preparatory School
DfE Number	812/6001
EYFS Number	EY416221
Address	St Martin's Preparatory School 63 Bargate Grimsby Lincolnshire DN34 5AA
Telephone Number	01472 878907
Email Address	headmaster@stmartinsprep.co.uk
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Thompson
Proprietor	Mr Ali Khan
Age Range	2 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	128
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (55 boys; 73 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 4 3-5 (EYFS) 50 5-11: 74
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 June 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. The previous EYFS registered setting inspection was carried out by Ofsted in November 2011.

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. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Former Head of Prep, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Martin's is a coeducational preparatory school for children between the ages of 2 and 11. The school is situated in a residential area of Grimsby and centred around a Grade II listed Edwardian building. Linked modern buildings provide accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- 1.2 The school is proprietorial and changed hands just at the time of the previous inspection; a new headteacher was then appointed from within the staff. The school is one of a group of five schools owned by the same principal, who also holds the headship at one of the group's schools. The other schools are located more than 200 miles distant. The owner carries out all matters of governance for St Martin's, with assistance from a financial director, and the school's headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school.
- 1.3 The school's main aim is to provide a rigorous education through a balanced curriculum within a happy and caring environment, where high ethical standards are promoted through a strong family-focused ethos. Within this framework, St Martin's strives to enable children to realise their potential through working diligently and developing the skills of independent and cooperative working.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 128 pupils were on roll (55 boys and 73 girls). Fifty-four pupils were in the EYFS (27 boys and 27 girls), of whom four were under the age of three and 39 were attending part-time. The majority of pupils are from local professional or business families, and in recent years a number of children have joined St Martin's later than the usual starting points. Admission is subject to the headteacher's agreement that the school is able to cater for the pupil's educational, physical and emotional needs.
- 1.5 At entry to the EYFS, the school's overall ability profile is in line with age-related expectations. The vast majority of pupils in the school are white British, with approximately one in fourteen from other ethnic backgrounds. None is at an early stage of speaking English. The school has currently identified 25 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), one of whom has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 National Curriculum 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 (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Nursery (ages 2-3)
Upper Kindergarten	Nursery (ages 3-4)
Reception	Reception
Year I	Year 1
Year II	Year 2
Year III	Year 3
Year IV	Year 4
Year V	Year 5
Year VI	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve well throughout the school, including in the EYFS, because the education provided is rigorous, in keeping with the school's aims. The pupils achieve high standards, especially in English and mathematics. Achievements throughout the school are firmly rooted in literacy and mathematics; pupils show increasing confidence in using these skills across the curriculum, and their use of information and communication technology (ICT) is developing. Good teaching and a focused curriculum underpin the pupils' success. The broad range of extra-curricular activities complements the main curriculum and allows pupils to develop their own interests including sporting or creative. The provision for pupils with SEND, including those with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with EAL, is well integrated, with effective support within and outside of lessons. More-able pupils are catered for in most teaching. Overall, however, the limited range of teaching methods restricts pupils' opportunities for imaginative, independent and cooperative learning, and the use of information gathered about pupils' progress is not fully developed.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils throughout the school is a great strength. Pastoral care is excellent; the school creates the happy and caring environment with a strong family-focused ethos that is described in the school's aims. There are warm relationships between pupils and staff, and pupils flourish in the supportive and understanding atmosphere. They greatly enjoy being part of the school community and enjoy undertaking the responsibilities they are given. Pupils are unfailingly polite to visitors and treat their peers and staff with great respect. All the policies and procedures for health and safety are implemented effectively.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are good overall, including in the EYFS. Most aspects of governance are fulfilled effectively although its monitoring of the EYFS is less well developed. All checks on staff are carried out fully and correctly, and recorded appropriately. The strongest success of the senior leadership is in nurturing the ethos of 'caring fun' for pupils, in a happy school with a warm 'family feel'. This is reflected in the pupils' excellent personal development, which forms a supportive backdrop for their high academic results. However, plans for development are not linked closely enough to the intended impact on pupils' achievements, especially in the EYFS. Progress on the recommendations of the previous inspection has been mixed. The roles of subject coordinators have developed well, but teamwork at a more senior level and use of the data now collected about pupils' progress to further improve leadership, teaching and achievement, are under-developed. Links with parents are strong; parents are highly satisfied with almost all aspects of the school.

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. Increase the range of teaching methods to promote lively, investigative, cooperative learning.
2. Make better use of information about pupils' progress to promote further improvements in achievement, teaching and leadership.
3. Strengthen senior leadership teamwork over the whole school and increase the impact of governance in the EYFS.
4. In the EYFS, develop planning to include a wider range of the children's interests, a focus on children's outcomes, and greater use of the outside area.

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 of all ages develop high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding especially in literacy and numeracy, maintaining the quality noted at the previous inspection. A key factor in this is pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and their strong individual commitment to achieving high standards, helping the school to achieve its aim for its pupils to realise their potential.
- 3.3 Pupils build on the good start they receive in the EYFS. They are articulate and confident with each other and when talking to adults. They listen exceptionally well, respecting the views of others, and they read enthusiastically, reaching high standards. Pupils write cogently. They absorb information well. They are able to think logically but are not so well-skilled in working in groups, or thinking creatively, because they are not given as many opportunities for this kind of learning. They demonstrate a high degree of perseverance. They are competent dealing with numbers and solving paper-based mathematical problems. They apply their knowledge and understanding of number successfully across other subjects, such as science and geography. Achievements in ICT are good.
- 3.4 A good standard is evident in art, music and physical education (PE). The small numbers involved reduce opportunities for team sports but football and netball teams are regularly fielded, recording some wins, and the boys' swimming team won first place recently in League 1 of the inter-schools swimming gala. Pupils achieve good standards in a range of extra-curricular sports such as fencing, martial arts and yoga. About a quarter of the pupils have passed instrumental music examinations.
- 3.5 Pupils with SEND and those with EAL achieve well. They make good progress in relation to their starting points because they receive strong additional support. Their progress is confirmed by the improvement in their reading, spelling and numeracy skills, as well as their high levels of self-esteem. More-able pupils and those with particular talents make good progress in lessons when they are given high level challenges. However, this is not always consistent in all year groups and subjects.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for 2009 to 2011. Results at age of 11 in the national curriculum tests are well above the national average for maintained primary schools. This level of attainment and the nationally standardised progress data available, demonstrate a rate of progress that is good overall in the main school, relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. The data for 2012 continue this trend. Inspection evidence, as seen in lesson observations, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews with them, confirm good achievement overall, but rates of progress vary from sound to excellent.
- 3.7 The strong focus on English and mathematics leads to the majority of pupils achieving places at local grammar schools at age 11. Their achievements overall make a significant contribution to their personal development, enabling them to demonstrate individual confidence, team skills and respect for each other. Most of the pupils realise their potential through working diligently, in keeping with the school's aims. They work very well as individuals, in all classes, often silently getting on with their work, but skills in investigating and cooperating in groups, are less strong.

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

- 3.8 The quality of the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The curriculum has maintained its quality since the previous inspection, meeting the school's aim to provide balance, which it does by including all the requisite areas of learning. The allocation of time is in keeping with the school's focus on achieving grammar school places for its pupils. To this end, particular emphasis is placed upon developing skills in the core subjects of English and mathematics, with weight given to preparation for examinations and this limits the breadth provided in Years 5 and 6.
- 3.10 The curriculum includes an appropriate range of geography, history, religious education and a range of science tuition, but cross-curricular links using a creative approach are not fully exploited, particularly in the junior years. An effective personal, social, health and citizenship education programme (PSHCE) is offered. This is incorporated into religious education and assemblies, and supports pupils' emotional development very well.
- 3.11 Much of the curriculum is taught by class teachers. Specialist teaching in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 enables good continuity and work to be precisely fitted to pupils' needs. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in French from the Kindergarten, Spanish from Year 5, and music and PE from the youngest age. ICT is taught as a discrete subject but its additional use to support learning in other subjects is more limited.
- 3.12 Long-term curricular planning offers good coverage of each subject included. The focus on examination preparation in the final years limits the variety of teaching methods. The school day is extended by the provision of before- and after- school care, offering good quality facilities for those who partake. The school makes the best of its relatively small site and historically listed accommodation to stimulate learning. The library provides a pleasant, comfortable environment, with a good selection of fiction material and a smaller range of non-fiction.
- 3.13 Curricular support for those with SEND or EAL is strong, fulfilling the school's aims to enable pupils to achieve their potential. The systems for identifying and supporting these pupils work well. Specialist staff liaise closely with other staff, and those identified as needing support are given individual education plans, which are well monitored. Able, gifted and talented pupils are identified and some measures are in place to cater for them in some subject areas.
- 3.14 A good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, including in music, sport and crafts, enriches pupils' experiences. School staff teach some, and others, such as martial arts and fencing, are provided by visiting specialists. An excellent variety of musical instrumental peripatetic tuition is offered. The PE curriculum includes a good range of extra sports activities, supporting pupils' physical development, well-being and good health. Football, swimming and netball teams represent the school in competitions and tournaments, linking with local schools. Other curricular links with the local and wider community are enabled through a variety of trips and educational visits, for instance, to museums, theatre, through a residential outdoor pursuits holiday for Years 5 and 6, and through visitors into school. These add much to the pupils' enjoyment of their learning. Further good links are forged through a variety of fund raising events for charity, including a local hospice and a 'Books for Africa' project.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 The teaching successfully promotes the school's aims to provide a rigorous education within a happy and caring environment. It leads to most pupils' successful entrance to local grammar schools and high standards in national curriculum tests, from starting points that are much like other pupils nationally.
- 3.17 The teaching has strengths. At its best, clear learning objectives are often revisited throughout the lesson, to enable assessment of the pupils' understanding. The use of probing questions skilfully moves learning forward and leads to deeper understanding; tasks offer a variety of demand to meet individual needs. Generally, the teachers' expectations of pupils are high. For instance, comprehension questions on a Robert Louis Stevenson poem studied by upper juniors required quite deep understanding of the imagery related to literary devices, while a Spanish lesson expected and achieved sustained high levels of enthusiasm and good co-operative work when pupils were learning the names of body parts. Brisk, timed tasks means that learning usually proceeds at a good pace, as in a mathematics lesson for younger juniors, who tackled new work enthusiastically to find the median in mathematics, and in an infant-age class where pupils wrote sentences to match picture prompts, consolidating recently-acquired skills.
- 3.18 Occasionally, teaching uses too little variety of method and pupils are given too few opportunities to work co-operatively or tackle real-life problems needing extended reasoning or creativity. Older pupils benefit from teaching by subject specialists, although the small size of some groups reduces opportunities for viable discussion and interaction. Completing lists of comprehension questions or sums, which is too frequent in most year groups but especially for the older pupils, limits the encouragement for pupils to be curious, and to think and discuss tasks with each other, hindering possible wider understanding of concepts. The linking of subjects together and the imaginative use of resources are sometimes limited. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to use modern technology or to link learning together and make it relevant to real-life situations.
- 3.19 In all teaching, strong relationships between teachers and pupils are evident and these are a significant factor in the pupils' successful achievement. Classroom behaviour is of a high standard, and praise and encouragement are used to excellent effect to add much to the pupils' progress and stimulate effort.
- 3.20 Pupils with SEND or EAL are supported effectively in lessons by their teachers and by teaching assistants, enabling them to make excellent progress, and are given work appropriate to their needs. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are also provided for well.
- 3.21 Overall, the marking of books and the use of assessment has improved since the previous inspection. The best marking is encouraging and gives specific guidance on improvement. Assessment data is used to judge pupils' attainment and how well they are progressing. This information is used most effectively to identify those who need additional support but is not so well used to ensure that other groups make as much progress as they can.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The personal development of pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim to promote high ethical standards in a happy and caring environment. The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils develop high levels of self-confidence, showing considerable emotional maturity for their age. For instance, they participate with great enthusiasm in singing hymns and songs in assemblies, and absorb the values that are explored there, in religious education and through the PSHCE programme. They are thankful for, and thoroughly appreciative of, the benefits they enjoy in life.
- 4.3 Pupils develop an exceptional moral sense. They have an extremely strong understanding of right and wrong and their behaviour is exemplary, both in and around the school. They follow meticulously the school's Golden Rules, which include striving to be truthful and honest, and respecting other people's property. Pupils show great respect for one another and are extremely courteous and considerate in their dealings with other pupils and with adults. They work and play together with great friendliness and show excellent manners. They co-operate and collaborate fully with their teachers in lessons, and with each other.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils readily accept responsibility in many forms, for example, as register monitors and playground buddies, or when handing out books; in addition, older pupils act as house captains and librarians. They are very eager to contribute to the well-being of the school community; they gain a good understanding of British institutions and democracy through lessons in history, geography and through PSHCE. Older pupils have opportunities to support younger pupils, which they do with care and interest. For example, Year 2 pupils made 'Big Books' for EYFS children which are displayed in the library. Pupils develop a strong sense of the need to help those less fortunate than themselves, for instance, by contributing willingly to charitable causes, locally, nationally and globally. Pupils elect representatives to the school council and its members take their role seriously in representing the views and ideas of their peers at meetings and in suggesting matters for school improvement. These activities also support pupils' developing social, political and economic awareness.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is well developed. They show understanding of and respect for Christianity as well as other major faiths and enjoy listening to visitors to the school who describe their faiths. They gain good understanding about diversity by participating in, and listening to, the music of different countries, through their study of history, art and literature, and by sharing their knowledge. For instance, in an assembly during the inspection, pupils shared their learning from their studies in geography, contrasting their way of life compared with the day-to-day lives of children in the Netherlands.
- 4.6 Pupils leave the school with excellent personal skills that fit them very well for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.7 The school provides excellent pastoral care.
- 4.8 The high quality of care provided reflects the school's aim to provide a happy, caring environment. This helps pupils to succeed academically and grow in confidence, preparing them well for entry to their next school. Each member of staff contributes exceptionally well to supporting and guiding the pupils, under the coordination of the senior leadership. Communication is highly effective, usually through informal discussion, as is appropriate for the small numbers involved.
- 4.9 Relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are highly constructive and based upon mutual respect. Pupils are well known as individuals and this enables the right kind of pastoral care to be provided readily. The school demonstrates its greatest strength in its promotion of high quality behaviour. It guards against bullying, dealing constructively with any unacceptable behaviour. The arrangements ensure that pupils feel safe and secure, confident that they can turn for help to adults or other pupils if necessary, including the 'playground buddies'. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and takes account of these pupils' needs.
- 4.10 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and in discussion, pupils indicated that pastoral care is very strong. Pupils learn about the importance of fitness and regular exercise and are provided with ample opportunities for this. Pupils learn and understand about healthy eating but some feel they are given insufficient opportunity to select a healthy diet from the school menu. Inspectors agree with this perception. The pupils feel their views and ideas are listened to. Their views are obtained through the school council, which actively seeks the views of all the pupils and represents them at council meetings.

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

- 4.11 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.12 The required policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully implemented. All staff, whatever their responsibilities, have undertaken child protection training, are aware of their responsibilities and update their training at the required intervals. Senior staff with specific responsibilities receive specialist training and ensure that all staff are trained at the appropriate time. Safer recruitment procedures are carefully followed for all new staff.
- 4.13 Policies and procedures needed adjustment during the inspection to meet requirements particularly regarding the EYFS, but all are now compliant. Health and safety procedures are appropriately adhered to. Effective measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards, and suitable records and documentation of all aspects of health and safety are kept. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school, including external visits.
- 4.14 There are appropriate arrangements for sick or injured pupils. Staff are well informed about individual pupils' needs and conditions, including any pupils with SEND. The school has appropriate facilities for medical provision and several staff are trained in first aid. The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately and suitably archived.

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 proprietor maintains a good overall view of the school and ensures due regard is given to the school's aims. Thorough checks are made to ensure that academic standards are being maintained. Supported by a financial director, financial procedures enable strong financial oversight so that the procurement of resources throughout the school is efficient and considered, including staff, resources and accommodation.
- 5.3 The governance provided is knowledgeable, interested and involved in the school. Wide-ranging expertise enables the good support, challenge and stimulus for improvement evident in most aspects of school life. This helps the school to fulfil its aims and ensure the good achievement and excellent personal development of the pupils. The regular information received from the most senior staff informs the proprietor on most aspects of school life, but required oversight of the EYFS, and attention to fulfilling the recommendation of the previous inspection regarding the development of a senior team with a 'united strategic vision', have not been as strong.
- 5.4 The proprietor clearly understands his role and responsibilities, particularly in respect of child protection, secure recruitment, and health and safety. He oversees the maintenance of a centralised register that records the recruitment checks undertaken on the appointment of staff. Monitoring of policies and procedures is suitably carried out, including the annual review of the safeguarding policy.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good overall.
- 5.6 A happy and purposeful atmosphere pervades all areas of the school, fulfilling its aim. The greatest strengths in leadership, and the clearest direction, are reflected in the pupils' high academic standards, in response to good teaching, and their outstanding personal development, in response to the exceptional pastoral care provided. Subject coordinators are a strong team who work well together. They are united in their keen sense of purpose, communicate very well together and provide strong support for pupils and the school.
- 5.7 Senior leaders form a less cohesive team and their teamwork is less well developed. This means, for instance, that, while leadership of the EYFS is good, it functions rather independently, and the progress data gathered by class teachers through the school is not summarised. In the top two year groups, progress is not measured precisely enough, especially for the more able. As a result, self-evaluation and the overview of pupils' progress as a whole is not clear. Staff recognise the need for the outcomes of the chosen development priorities to be focused more on raising pupils' achievement.

- 5.8 The school is successful in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff, and all required checks and records are in place. Staff receive appropriate and regular training in matters of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Recently, more effective arrangements have been introduced to measure the quality of teaching through observation and feedback. While the written feedback is thorough, it shows that the observations are not focused sufficiently sharply on pupils' progress. A comprehensive staff handbook gives staff useful guidance, and good induction arrangements ensure that new appointees are well informed of school routines and safeguarding arrangements.
- 5.9 The premises are suitably maintained by caring staff, providing a safe environment in which the pupils have opportunities to develop their potential and demonstrate their skills. The school runs efficiently due to the care of all those who work hard to support the pupils, including the administration, housekeeping, and maintenance personnel.
- 5.10 Links with parents are strong. The response of the parents to the pre-inspection questionnaire was strongly positive overall. About a fifth of parents responding to the questionnaire felt that bullying was not dealt with well and that their concerns were not handled well by managers. However, inspectors looked carefully at records and spoke with pupils and staff and judged that these matters were dealt with in accordance with the school's policies.
- 5.11 Parents are satisfied that communication with the school, at every level, is constructive and supportive and that any concerns are addressed swiftly and effectively. They receive weekly newsletters, which give a useful insight into the life of the school; in addition, opportunities are available to experience learning first hand through events such as the recent World Book day and the French Café. An active parent-teachers association organises a full diary of social events for the whole school family such as a disco and an Easter-egg hunt.
- 5.12 Parents and prospective parents have access to all the required information by contacting the school. The website is being developed to be a more effective means of providing parents of pupils and prospective pupils with access to policies and other key information about the school.
- 5.13 Leaders and managers listen carefully to the views of parents and in response to those views the school has adapted the system of reporting on pupils' progress to include a short summary of core subjects and conduct in the autumn and spring terms, as well as the full and detailed report covering all subjects each summer. Parents are invited into school to discuss their child's progress formally annually but there are few other opportunities to inform them regarding their child's curriculum or how to best support them in their learning. However, the school readily welcomes visits by individual parents at other times.

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 good. The curriculum is well organised, with good coverage of the seven areas of learning. Planned activities help most to reach at least the expected levels of development. Staff are alert to children's needs, including children with SEND or EAL, the more-able and any disadvantaged children. Staff help all children to do what they are trying to do, without taking over. They join in the under-threes' play, sensitively fitting in with the children's ideas. They engage and motivate; they give good support and they encourage all children to try new activities, to express their own ideas and to value and respect those of others. In all the EYFS classes, the children are well prepared for the next stages. The indoor and outdoor spaces are arranged and resourced well to provide opportunities for children to move, engage in role play, be creative and to practise skills independently. However, planning is not tailored as much as it could be to individual children's interests. The outside environment is not fully utilised to provide planned challenge across all areas of learning. Parents are informed fully about their child's development and express great appreciation for the way in which their child is helped to settle and for the extremely warm and caring bonds which are quickly formed with all staff.

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

6.2 Provision for the children's well-being is good. Each child is allocated a key person who ensures that strong and caring relationships develop. All staff act as excellent role models giving clear guidance on behaviour and placing a high priority on the safety and well-being of the children. For example, the under-threes are provided with a tranquil and comfortable area to rest or to enjoy a story with an adult. Older children are taught the importance of healthy eating and exercise and given careful instruction on how to keep themselves safe. They can explain, for example, the need to wash hands carefully before eating to avoid the spread of germs. Risk assessments and fire procedures are well known. Children are very well supported to develop independence and use their imagination, and they are well-prepared as they move into the next class within the setting.

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

6.3 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good overall. However, they currently function independently of the whole school senior team. The proprietor supports the EYFS management, but has limited active involvement. Managers have developed good new provision for the under-threes, and show effective understanding of the latest EYFS areas of learning and how children learn. Staff are well trained and have undertaken appropriate child protection and paediatric first aid training. They implement safeguarding procedures well. Children are well cared for in a safe, spacious and well-organised environment. Managers have a good understanding of the strengths of the EYFS but priorities for future development are not currently linked to improving outcomes for the children, and the whole school self-evaluation is not a consultative process. Good checks ensure that staff performance within the EYFS improves, and training is provided. EYFS staff meet regularly to evaluate

children's progress. Any emerging needs are swiftly identified and appropriate interventions are sought to ensure all children receive the support they need. Partnerships with parents are good and most parents of EYFS children responding to the questionnaire fully support the school. Outside agencies are used appropriately to provide training for staff or help individual children if the need arises. Progress on the recommendations of the previous inspection has been mixed. The identification of children's next steps through observation and assessment has improved, but systems of evaluating the provision are still under developed.

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

- 6.4 The overall quality and standards of the provision are good. The provision enables all children to do well and make good progress relative to their starting points. By the end of Reception most have attained the early learning goals and some have exceeded them. The under-threes demonstrate a strong sense of their own identity and delight in their emerging abilities. This was evident at a pretend 'tea party' when, children poured, stirred and presented a 'cup of tea' with pride and satisfaction. Older children read simple texts fluently and have a secure understanding of number operations between 1 and 10. All children happily share resources, take turns and organise themselves effectively. In 'car wash', children gave willing assistance to each other in carrying heavy buckets of water, apportioned jobs fairly and negotiated an acceptable price for a wash and polish. By taking an interest in the backgrounds and cultures represented in the EYFS, children come to understand their individual differences and to respect one another. The welfare and safeguarding arrangements are good and all related policies and procedures are implemented rigorously.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.5 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.