



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**WILLINGTON SCHOOL**

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## Willington School

Full Name of School	<b>Willington School</b>
DfE Number	<b>315/6080</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>312733</b>
Address	<b>Willington School Worcester Road Wimbledon London SW19 7QQ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8944 7020</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 8944 9596</b>
Email Address	<b>office@willingtonschool.co.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Michael Chanter</b>
Chairman of Governors	<b>Dr Brian Whitmore</b>
Age Range	<b>4 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>265</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 35    5-11: 188 11-13: 42</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Elizabeth Rissen</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Boys</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>06 May 2014 to 09 May 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in May 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **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 deputy 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**

Mr David Horn	Reporting Inspector
Mr Giles Delaney	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Adrian Lowe-Wheeler	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Amanda Stables	Team Inspector (Head of Middle School, IAPS school)
Mrs Yvonne Parry	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Willington School is a day school for boys aged from 4 to 13, situated in a residential area in Wimbledon in south west London. The school was first established in Putney in 1885 where it operated continuously for 105 years, moving to its current premises in 1990. In recent years, facilities and buildings have been added and refurbished within the school grounds. These include specialist rooms for art and history, as well as new centres for mathematics, science and languages, a small studio theatre and upgraded music facilities. Team sports are played on nearby playing fields leased from the local Rugby Club. Previously privately owned, the school has been a charitable trust since 1961 with a board of governors who are also the trustees. The present headmaster took up the post in September 2013.
- 1.2 The school's motto, '*Non scholae sed vitae discimus*'; 'we do not learn for school, but for life', is the guiding principle behind daily life. The school is founded on a traditional base of Christian values seeking for pupils to learn in a disciplined and caring environment. The school aims to ensure that pupils leave school confident and articulate, and that they have the capacity to think for themselves and to lead, and have the ability to work as part of a team. It sets out to encourage pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and understanding, and to recognise the part they have to play in the world on a local and international scale.
- 1.3 Currently, 265 pupils attend the school, with 65 in Years 1 and 2, 123 in Years 3 to 6 and 42 in years 7 and 8. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) consists of thirty-five pupils in two Reception classes within the Junior Department building, with access downstairs to an outdoor learning area. The Junior Department comprises Years 1 to 3 and the Senior Department Years 4 to 8. Admission to the school in the Reception year is not selective on the grounds of academic ability. The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with most pupils having at least above average ability.
- 1.4 The school has identified 47 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who receive support as necessary. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. In total, 58 pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), and 9 are assisted occasionally with their English at school. The majority of pupils are of white British or European heritage, with a few from Asian or black British origin. Almost all live within five miles of the school.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 The aims of the school are well met. Pupils attain high standards, making consistently good and often excellent progress from their different starting points. They develop high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills over a wide variety of academic and creative subjects. The education and care of children in the EYFS are good. The curriculum is well balanced and there are good opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Literacy and numeracy skills are well developed and are applied successfully to a range of subjects. Overall, the well-resourced classrooms and specialist facilities enrich the educational experience of all pupils. The high quality of pupils' accomplishments results from the good quality of teaching and, where it is appropriately diverse and stimulating, pupils make rapid progress. The marking of pupils' work is not sufficiently developed and the learning needs of more able pupils are not yet effectively met in many cases.
- 2.2 Within the positive and supportive ethos of the school community, pupils become confident and considerate young people who are extremely well prepared for their senior schools. They are thoughtful and sensitive to the world around them and have a strong sense of moral responsibility towards the school and the wider world beyond. Pastoral care is good throughout the school and pupils flourish within a caring environment. In the EYFS, policies for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families have yet to be finalised. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, are thorough. In responses to the pupil questionnaire, a minority of pupils felt that teachers are not always fair in the way rewards and sanctions are given. The pupils interviewed and those asked for their views informally did not reflect the responses expressed in the questionnaire and inspectors found systems for rewards and sanctions to be administered justly.
- 2.3 Governors and school leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and meet their legal obligations in full. All regulatory non-compliance identified at the previous Ofsted inspection has now been rectified. The school's governance, leadership and management are good and are beginning to address several key changes that currently lack sufficient detail and refinement. These include improvements to systems for monitoring learning, tracking pupils' progress and staff appraisal. Senior staff have a good oversight of the school. They are continually looking at ways to develop and improve their work further, however, effective strategic planning and monitoring of the quality of teaching is not organised in systematic fashion. Links with parents are good throughout the school, including the EYFS. Parents expressed in responses to the questionnaire that they are extremely happy with the school and all it provides for their children.

**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. Develop a comprehensive strategic plan that embraces all aspects of managing the school.
2. Provide more challenging learning opportunities for the most able pupils in order to meet their needs.
3. Ensure that marking of pupils' work supports their learning and achievement by identifying clear targets for improvement.
4. Develop a formal and regular system of monitoring the quality of teaching linked to appraisal and professional development.
5. Conclude the development of a more formal and effective system for the professional supervision of EYFS staff who have contact with children and families.



### **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 excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, pupils of all ages cultivate high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. This is in line with the school's aims to enable them to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability. Pupils' attitudes to learning are constructive and they show commitment and perseverance in their quest for achieving excellent standards in their assignments. The pupils' develop excellent literacy and numeracy skills because of the clear focus on these areas, including careful monitoring of progress. They achieve high standards in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, which they clearly enjoy and which contribute very well to their personal development.
- 3.3 Pupils of all ages are eloquent and communicate their ideas very effectively and fluently. Throughout the school, they are confident, both with each other and when discussing issues in class with their teachers. They listen well, respecting the opinions of others, and are able to read with clarity of meaning and expression. The pupils write convincingly, presenting strong evidence of coherence and rational thought. This is demonstrated in displays of excellent creative writing and imaginative poetry in exercise books and on display boards around the school. Pupils are able to reason logically and undertake independent and investigative activities, in a Year 6 history project, for example. In lessons observed where small co-operative groups of pupils were able to share ideas together, they made rapid progress.
- 3.4 Achievements in information and communication technology (ICT) are of a high standard, especially when employed for developing computing and programming skills. Pupils show perseverance when speaking French in class. Music is a particular strength of the school. In particular, the standard of singing in the choirs is exceptional and the quality of instrumental music, exemplified in the well-supported school orchestra and music scholarship programme, is very high. Pupils achieve success in sport, often at county or national level; several have represented Surrey and Middlesex counties in cricket, tennis, swimming, fencing and athletics.
- 3.5 Children in the EYFS write simple sentences independently using capital letters and full stops, and read exceptionally well. In mathematics, they add and subtract numbers up to 20 and understand simple shape and symmetry. Most reach expected levels of development by the end of the Reception year and some exceed age-related expectations. The children's positive attitudes to learning and evident enjoyment in practical tasks result in imaginative and attractive displays of work in the setting.
- 3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This is confirmed by evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work books, internal examination results and the high quality of pupils' assignments in many of the lessons observed. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, and gain places at senior schools of their choice, with high levels of success in entrance and scholarship examinations.

- 3.7 Pupils with SEND or EAL, including those in the EYFS, make at least good and sometimes excellent progress because they receive consistent and helpful additional support that develops high self-esteem. Their rapid progress is demonstrated in the high quality of their reading, spelling and numeracy skills. The many more able pupils have particular talents and achieve highly at school. However, in spite of these pupils often working at a very high level, they are not consistently provided with sufficient challenge.
- 3.8 The pupils are lively and curious about the world, keen to be involved in lessons and willing to take on new challenges. They behave well in class and focus intently on their work. The written presentation of assignments is excellent amongst pupils up to Year 6 and less consistent in Years 7 and 8. The pupils take great pride in projects and are capable of producing excellent volumes of work.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.10 The curricular provision fulfils the school's aims of fostering the application of intellectual, physical and creative interest. Overall, the curriculum is suitable for all ages, needs and abilities, and is very effective in promoting the pupils' excellent achievement and personal development. It is both extensive and well balanced in its construction and organisation. The academic curriculum is well supported by a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities that are well suited to pupils of all ages and abilities.
- 3.11 From Years 1 to 3 pupils are taught most of their lessons by a class teacher, with support from specialist teachers in music, religious studies, gymnastics, French and ICT. Pupils are set for mathematics from Year 4 and taught in broad ability groups from Year 7. Latin is introduced in Year 4 and French is taught from the EYFS. The physical education (PE) and games programmes include a good range of activities that encourage the pupils to become physically active. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is not taught as a regularly timetabled subject. Although the scheme is covered through a range of separate activities, assemblies and meetings with the pupils, the allocation of time is only just sufficient to cover the proposed programme of study. Provision for ICT has increased in recent years and a new programme of study has been fully implemented. Pupils access computers in the well-equipped library at certain times of the day in order to pursue further independent study. The pupils' experience of design technology lacks sufficient planning and evaluation. Throughout the school, including the EYFS, there is a strong focus on reading and literacy. Phonics sessions in the EYFS promote early writing skills and particularly good progress in reading.
- 3.12 Pupils with SEND or EAL are very well provided for by specialist teachers who sensitively support them in separate lessons and in the classroom. In the EYFS, staff are increasing opportunities to challenge more able children. Opportunities for the most able senior pupils to be extended and challenged include a weekly enrichment class that covers a variety of subject areas: academic, music and art. Occasions when the most able pupils are challenged to achieve and make progress in lessons are infrequent.
- 3.13 The curriculum is enhanced by an effective programme of day and residential trips that aim to support and extend the pupils' academic learning and develop their collaborative skills. For example, in Year 4, pupils participate in a residential team-

building trip. Cross-curricular links between subjects are discretely planned and well utilised throughout the school. The curriculum is further supported by a range of visitors to the school who have spoken on topics including neuro-surgery, journalism and the redevelopment of the Olympic site at Stratford. Pupils, including those in the EYFS, make very effective use of their local environment, visiting places of interest to support their studies in both history and science. Good use is made of limited space indoors but opportunities for learning and challenge outdoors are currently limited by lack of easy access.

- 3.14 Extra-curricular activities are well organised and purposeful, as well as being very popular. The pupils enjoy the wide range of provision and especially value the freedom and opportunity to organise their own activities, such as a recently formed debating club. High quality and diverse musical opportunities include individual tuition in a range of orchestral instruments and provide pupils with the chance to rehearse and perform in an orchestra, several choirs and a jazz band. High quality opportunities for the pupils to participate in a range of sports during lessons and after school promote physical fitness and competition.

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

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 Teaching supports the school's aims of encouraging the pupils to make progress according to their abilities so that understanding is increased and skills are developed. It enables pupils to develop a secure understanding of all subjects and allows them to make good and often excellent progress. Most lessons are taught at a good pace, use appropriate resources, and foster pupils' listening and literacy skills. Teachers' questioning, backed up by excellent subject knowledge, is targeted effectively to check understanding. Imaginative questioning develops pupils' higher-order thinking skills, and a variety of teaching methods and tasks is used to stimulate and challenge the pupils. Praise and encouragement are frequently used to excellent effect. In less effective lessons observed, teaching was at times over directed and the tasks did not challenge the pupils sufficiently, resulting in a few instances of poor behaviour.
- 3.17 In the EYFS, the staff enthuse, engage and motivate the children, enabling them to acquire the skills and capacity to learn and develop effectively. Careful assessments identify learning objectives. Teachers use a good variety of resources and utilise an appropriate balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. The good range of resources throughout the school, including ICT, are well utilised to aid the pupils' learning. Additional interactive whiteboards have been introduced recently and their use in the lessons observed clearly enhanced the teaching. Literacy is very well resourced, with a wide variety of reading literature available in classrooms and libraries. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils are successful in achieving the levels of attainment desired as they transition into the Senior Department, and in Years 7 and 8 pupils are very well prepared for scholarships and entrance examinations to other senior schools.
- 3.18 Teachers' planning is thorough and succinctly presented. Subject department policies provide an overview of all subjects and schemes of work correlate accurately with teachers' lesson plans. Pupils' work is tracked effectively through good annotation of test results, however this wealth of information is not used consistently to inform the next stage of teachers' planning. Marking lacks sufficient indications of how pupils' work might be improved.

- 3.19 A clear and well-implemented SEND and EAL policy ensures that all pupils, including those in the EYFS, are appropriately and sensitively supported. Suitable documentation is well organised and efficiently disseminated to staff, although it does not consistently impact effectively on teaching in the classroom.
- 3.20 In responses to the pupil questionnaire, a few pupils felt that homework does not help them to learn and that they are not given the right amount. Those interviewed did not concur with these views and said that they enjoy undertaking projects and research for homework, which give them opportunities to investigate a range of interesting topics. Pupils are very positive about how much teachers help them to learn, and younger pupils remarked on how helpful they find the verbal feedback given to them to support their learning.

## **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 pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development by the time they leave the school is excellent and represents successful fulfilment of the school's aims. In the EYFS, transition arrangements, including visits to feeder nurseries, are very effective and ensure that the children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. The children respond to school life with enthusiasm and enjoyment, sharing, taking turns and behaving well. They co-operate with each other, and show high levels of confidence, increasing independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils' self-esteem is high because they are valued as individuals and their achievements are celebrated every week in news and achievements assemblies. In addition, displays of poetry, both in the classrooms and around the school, demonstrate the pupils' maturity and self-confidence. Pupils' self-worth and sense of responsibility are strengthened through the praise and encouragement they are given. A strong spirituality is reflected in the school's outstanding choirs and in the Year 7 creative writing entry for a national poetry competition. The family atmosphere throughout the school from Reception to Year 8 fosters a developing self-awareness, which is central to the school's aims. The study of world religions in religious studies lessons and in a range of assemblies further amplifies the pupils' awareness of spirituality.
- 4.4 Pupils show excellent moral awareness. They understand the difference between right and wrong, and a code of conduct instigated and promoted by the pupils themselves helps to develop strong community values. The pupils listen carefully to the views of others and are articulate in expressing their own thoughts and concerns, showing respect and consideration in conversations with their peers and teachers. This was exemplified to very good effect in a lesson on miracles. Pupils' awareness of morality is developed through being encouraged to address concerns by themselves and looking for adult support when appropriate.
- 4.5 Pupils' social awareness is very well developed. In the EYFS, the children concentrate well, are friendly and confident, and good behaviour is the norm. Older pupils are able to accept responsibility and demonstrate resourcefulness, contributing much to the school and the wider world. Older pupils mentor new pupils when they arrive at the school for the first time, encouraging a sense of responsibility. Team building and co-operation are promoted through an annual Year 8 residential trip to the Isle of Wight. Pupils are developing an appreciation of public service through the choir's preparation for evensong in a local church. They take great pride in their charity work for a range of good causes they select themselves, such as the plan to collect stationery for a school in the Kibera slum in Kenya.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. They gain an understanding and knowledge of other cultures by celebrating various religious festivals throughout the year, such as Diwali, with parents and staff. In addition, visitors from other faiths have been welcomed at the school, including a recent visit from a rabbi who discussed notions of faith with the pupils. The pupils in Years 6 and 7 gain a good appreciation of cultural differences through the annual French trip. This is further

enhanced in lessons in which they reflect on literature and music from around the world.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.8 The school fulfils its aims to provide a happy, safe environment in which pupils can learn, work hard and be considerate towards others. Open and supportive relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves underpin a strong and purposeful community. Induction for new pupils is carefully planned; they are made to feel welcome and are well supported by more established peers. Class teachers and tutors discuss pastoral issues with the pupils at the beginning of the school day, where any concerns may be raised. Opportunities for older pupils in Years 6 to 8 to address these issues are, however, much less frequent, particularly in the absence of a detailed PSHE programme.
- 4.9 Pupils respond well to the many opportunities to enjoy exercise in PE and games lessons, and in extra-curricular activities. They are encouraged to be healthy through developing good eating habits and by taking regular exercise, and are encouraged to walk to school when this is possible. Pupils are eager to join the school council in order to voice their opinions and express their concerns. When some pupils expressed the view that they found the system for rewards and sanctions to be unduly complex and confusing, joint meetings of representatives from the school council and senior teachers came together to review the procedure.
- 4.10 A minority of pupils expressed the view in the pre-inspection questionnaire that staff unfairly use rewards and sanctions. Evidence from formal and informal conversations with pupils of all ages, and from scrutiny of the school's records of sanctions did not support this view. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment are effective and well monitored by staff. On the rare occasions when bullying does occur, clear and prompt procedures are in place to deal with it and are well known by staff.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, key people promote the children's well-being and independence, and their consistently calm, positive approach leads to exemplary behaviour. The children enjoy talking and playing imaginatively in the safe, stimulating and well-resourced surroundings. The staff promote a positive attitude to physical exercise and a healthy diet through topic work, and encourage the children's independence in personal hygiene and other self-help skills.
- 4.12 Considerable care is taken to provide help and support for pupils with SEND. The requisite plan is in place to improve educational access for these pupils.

#### **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 Safeguarding policies and procedures have regard to the latest official guidance and are effectively implemented throughout the school, including in the EYFS. Procedures and arrangements support the school's aim to promote a caring and positive environment where the pupils feel happy and safe. The child protection officers value the link to a designated governor who has also undergone training at the appropriate level. Child protection training for all staff is robust and reporting procedures are fully understood. Safer recruitment procedures for new staff are followed rigorously. The school has close links with local children's services.
- 4.15 Throughout the school, health and safety procedures are extremely thorough. A health and safety committee meets termly and carries out its role efficiently, keeping detailed minutes and informing the governing body. The school has two designated first-aid officers and suitable numbers of staff have received first-aid training, including paediatric training. Records of treatment and medication are detailed, and a register of medical needs facilitates awareness for staff when planning school trips. The medical room has appropriate facilities for pupils who fall ill during the school day and procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils with SEND. Detailed risk assessments are carried out for all aspects of school life, and premises and electrical equipment are stringently checked.
- 4.16 All necessary measures are taken to minimise the risks from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are carried out to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors. Members of staff have received appropriate fire awareness training, with specialist training for designated staff.
- 4.17 Admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained and stored as required. Unexplained absences are quickly followed up and pupils are well supervised.

## **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 governors are very supportive of the school, and are keen to maintain its character in accordance with its aims. The wide range of expertise within the governing body is used effectively. Minutes of governors' meetings are recorded in detail and demonstrate a good knowledge of the workings of the school. Committee structures are carefully organised to optimise time efficiently. New governors receive effective induction to their role from a mentor and regular training is undertaken through national organisations. Strategic planning of future developments has been carefully considered, though documentation lacks sufficient indication of priorities and the actions needed to meet them. Finances are efficiently targeted and prioritised, and the prudent management of premises and resources has enabled the school to maintain its good levels of provision.
- 5.3 The governors, many of whom are parents of current or former pupils, have a clear insight into the work of the school through frequent visits to a range of events and activities held throughout the school year. They play an effective part in overseeing the work of the EYFS, and visit regularly to gain first-hand insight and ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Presentations from staff at governors' meetings have enhanced governors' knowledge of the school. Through their monitoring role, the governors provide excellent support for the school; minutes of governors' meetings demonstrate that the leadership is held to account for the well-ordered running of the school.
- 5.4 The governors discharge their statutory responsibilities effectively, ensuring that all regulations are fully met. They fulfil their commitment to reviewing the school's safeguarding procedures annually, ensuring that procedures are followed and implemented in practice. All previous regulatory non-compliance has been appropriately rectified.

### **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.
- 5.6 Leadership and management successfully promote the aims and distinctive qualities of the school. They maintain a good quality of education and provide the stimulus for the pupils' high achievement and excellent personal development. The highly committed senior leadership ensures that the responsibilities of senior managers are well defined, and transitions between the Senior and the Junior Department of the school operate successfully. The school's provision is evaluated regularly in consultation with the governors, and areas for further development are identified through a regularly reviewed strategic plan. The plan is currently being refined to include timelines, costs, success criteria and staffing responsibility. Self-evaluation through weekly meetings of senior staff has enabled the school to identify its strengths and areas where it needs to make further improvements, and to set priorities for the future. Senior leaders monitor the implementation of the school's



academic and pastoral policies and procedures, including those of the EYFS, especially for safeguarding pupils' welfare.

- 5.7 Subject co-ordinators ensure that subject schemes of work are consistent in quality and content, although some subject documents lack sufficient detail. Schemes are beginning to include subject department development plans, giving an indication of how the subject is intended to progress over time. The leadership regularly undertakes observation of lessons, and teachers are encouraged to plan together, where methodology and effective classroom practice may be discussed. Subject co-ordinators' roles are well known, though these have yet to be set out formally.
- 5.8 The provision for pupils with SEND or EAL has continued to develop through the support of the leadership, and good organisation by specialist staff. Where individual pupil plans are well known by staff, they make a valuable contribution to the pupils' progress, development and confidence. The school is reviewing how the most able pupils in the school are supported and their particular talents recognised and developed.
- 5.9 In the EYFS, supervision arrangements enabling staff to discuss issues and receive coaching are currently lacking formality and sufficient clarity. The setting has an ambitious vision, underpinned by clear and appropriate plans for its future development. Educational provision within the setting is carefully monitored.
- 5.10 The appraisal system enables staff to evaluate and reflect on their professional skills and role within the school. A two-yearly review of all teaching staff includes discussion with the senior leadership and management, lesson observation, monitoring of pupils' books and the setting of objectives for further development. The process is then linked to an assessment of opportunities for professional training. At present, the process does not include a review of specific job descriptions and is not linked to whole-school strategic planning. Other training requirements, such as those for first aid and fire protection, are addressed at whole-staff training days. A prominent feature of leadership and management is the commitment of teaching, welfare and administrative staff to promoting and supporting the school's values.
- 5.11 The school adopts rigorous and secure recruitment procedures, and all staff have undergone a criminal records check. All staff, including teaching assistants and volunteers, are effectively deployed and provide the appropriate support required to meet the needs of all pupils. They receive regular professional training in safeguarding pupils, and welfare, health and safety, and demonstrate that procedures are well understood and implemented. A staff handbook provides useful guidance, and good induction procedures ensure that new staff are swiftly familiarised with the school's routines and processes. Detailed and supportive policies cover every aspect of life at school and are regularly reviewed.
- 5.12 The views of parents in responses to the questionnaire were very positive. They feel that the level of communication from the school is very effective and aids them in supporting their children's learning and personal development. They appreciate the emphasis that the school places on high standards of behaviour, the breadth of curriculum on offer, the wide programme of extra-curricular activities and the information they receive about their children's progress, academically and pastorally. When their children join the school, they also feel very well supported by receiving comprehensive information that ensures that pupils make a comfortable and successful start.

- 5.13 The school has established excellent links with parents, in accordance with its aims. Parents value the opportunities they are offered to be involved in their children's learning. This is exemplified by the excellent revision notes that are provided to pupils in preparation for entrance examinations to senior schools and the comprehensive termly curriculum summaries provided for all parents. Parents have many opportunities to assist with school trips, and class representatives help with the co-ordination of events and communication with the school. Good opportunities exist for parents to continue their support of the school through the Parents of Willington group, which co-ordinates a wide range of well-supported social events for the school community. These include the Willington Voices, a joint staff and parent choir, film nights, discos and cake sales. Funds raised are invested in school projects and resources.
- 5.14 In the EYFS, the setting's engagement with parents is a strength. Parents expressed unanimous satisfaction with all aspects of provision and are involved in their children's learning, contributing to profiles, attending parents evenings, and helping with trips and visits. Strong partnerships with parents and outside agencies ensure that the children's individual needs are met.
- 5.15 The school makes considerable efforts to manage a very open approach to communication between parents and teachers. Parents feel welcome and able to approach teachers with questions or concerns, which are then dealt with swiftly and effectively. The leadership and senior teachers are responsive to concerns when they arise and the school's approach to dealing with complaints is in accordance with its own policy. The school is positive and pre-emptive in its communication with parents over sensitive topics, for example sex education and safe access to ICT. Question-and-answer meetings on these and other topics are well supported and clearly valued by parents.
- 5.16 Formal communication with parents is managed well and the school reports regularly on pupils' progress in terms of attainment and effort. Parents are appreciative of this process, which comprises half-termly report cards, twice-yearly written reports and annual parents evenings. Written reports are somewhat overly descriptive of the work that has been covered and insufficiently evaluative of its quality, and lack an indication of what pupils should do to improve.
- 5.17 The school communicates well with parents using text message alerts, email and homework diaries to ensure smooth running of the week. High quality information, including curriculum overviews and newsletters, is available for parents of current and prospective pupils on the school website. A regular newsletter highlights the pupils' achievements, sporting results, certificates, house points, and fixtures.

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