



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
YARRELLS PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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## Yarrells Preparatory School

Full Name of School	<b>Yarrells Preparatory School</b>
DfE Number	<b>835/6000</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY381351</b>
Address	<b>Yarrells Preparatory School Yarrells House Upton Poole Dorset BH16 5EU</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01202 622229</b>
Fax Number	<b>01202 620870</b>
Email Address	<b>secretary@yarrells.co.uk</b>
Headmistress	<b>Mrs Charlotte Oosthuizen</b>
Proprietor	<b>Mrs Natalie Covell</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>249</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (131 boys; 118 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 7      5-13: 184 3-5 (EYFS): 58</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>Total: 249</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Rebecca Chappell &amp; Mrs Deborah Hayes</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>11 November 2014 to 14 November 2014</b>

## 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 October 2008 and May 2012 (EYFS intermediate).

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. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Sue Bennett

Mr Ian Adams

Mr Marcus Gunn

Mrs Eithne Webster

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Yarrells Preparatory is an independent day school for boys and girls from aged two years to thirteen years old. The school was founded in 1927 and purchased by the proprietor in 1992. The school is situated in the small town of Upton, on the outskirts of Poole in Dorset. It is a private limited company. The proprietor and two family members are company directors, undertaking responsibility for the school's financial and administrative operations. In 2012, a Board of Reference was established to provide the proprietor and directors with support and guidance in their governing role. The current headmistress, appointed in 2013, takes full responsibility for all the educational aspects of the school, including for children ages two to five years in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 1.2 The school aims to create an atmosphere that is relaxed but purposeful and educates pupils intellectually, socially, morally, aesthetically, physically and spiritually. It seeks to encourage pupils' personal development by instilling a sense of decency, commitment, self-reliance, responsibility and respect for others and their cultural heritage, so that they learn to take their place in society. Since the previous inspection, the senior management and leadership roles have been redefined and channels of communication with parents greatly improved. There has been significant investment in information and communication technology (ICT) resources and the premises, to provide more teaching accommodation, including the installation of a large specialist outdoor education area.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection 249 pupils, 131 boys and 118 girls, were on the school roll. Of these, 65 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with 43 attending on a part-time basis. All children in the EYFS receive local authority funding. There are six pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), five of whom receive specialist support for their learning. No pupils have statements of educational needs or education and health care plans. Additionally, 25 pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), three of whom receive additional support from the school.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is mostly above the national average, although a wide spread of ability is represented. Pupils come from business or professional families based locally. Most pupils are of British ethnicity, although there are a variety of cultural backgrounds represented within the school community.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used by the school from Reception onwards and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the Nursery is shown in the following table.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Pips	Nursery (age 2 years)
Kindergarten	Nursery (age rising 3 years)
Transition	Nursery (age rising 4 years)

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

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

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good. The school successfully achieves its aim to educate pupils intellectually, socially, morally, aesthetically, physically and spiritually. The curricular provision is good with a broad subject range to suit pupils' abilities and needs. The quality of the extra-curricular enrichment is excellent. Good quality teaching enables all pupils to achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Provision for pupils with SEND and/or EAL is excellent. The provision for more able pupils is sound. Teaching does not always provide extension commensurate with their abilities. While the previous inspection recommendation has been addressed by the introduction of assessment processes, the marking and improvement target quality lacks consistent implementation. The EYFS provision is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of children's learning needs. They provide a vibrant learning environment, which motivates and enthuses, preparing them extremely well for future learning. This provision successfully addresses the recommendation from the previous inspection.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. A comprehensive personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) contributes significantly to this success. A warm and caring atmosphere pervades the school. The pupils have an overwhelmingly strong understanding of their moral and social responsibilities to the community. Pupils develop high spiritual and cultural awareness and through the eco-initiatives, demonstrate an excellent commitment to protecting the planet. Pastoral care systems are excellent and provide high quality pupil support. Pre-inspection questionnaire responses reveal a few parents and pupils with concerns over the school's handling of bullying. Additionally, pupils cite dissatisfaction with sanction rewards and consideration for their opinions. Inspectors do not concur with these views. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and incidents of misbehaviour are extremely rare and promptly addressed. Systems are consistent and documentation shows that they are fair. In the EYFS, relationships between staff and children are outstanding. Children form strong bonds with the caring adults, who have a thorough understanding of their individual needs and make excellent provision for their well-being.
- 2.3 The effectiveness of governance is sound. The proprietorial ownership has a clear oversight of the school and is supported by an advisory Board of Reference. Monitoring structures are strong and clearly evaluate the school's successes and prioritise future developments. Sound systems ensure the safety and welfare of pupils, although in the past governance has not fulfilled their statutory responsibilities to ensure all necessary and statutory recruitment checks have been completed before employees start work at the school. By the close of the inspection, all discrepancies had been fully and correctly rectified. The school's leadership and management, including for the EYFS, is good and links with parents are excellent. Previous inspection recommendations have nearly all been successfully addressed. Senior leadership roles have been reviewed, resulting in a strong educational direction. A good appraisal system has also been introduced. In the EYFS, appropriate systems are in place for supervising staff practice, although these lack the formality to ensure full effectiveness. Pre-inspection questionnaires conclude that the vast majority of parents are pleased with the school's care and provision.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- implement all the required recruitment checks on staff before they begin work [Part 4, paragraphs 19.2(a) and 22.3(b) under Suitability of staff and proprietors] and for the same reason [Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].
- 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 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Develop the consistent implementation of marking practice across the school and provide all pupils with clear written targets for improvement.
  2. Strengthen the provision for more able pupils to extend and challenge their learning.
  3. Improve the procedures that ensure that governance at all levels fully understands its statutory responsibilities.
  4. In the EYFS, strengthen the systems for the regular individual supervision of staff to provide support in their practice.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' learning and achievements is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to nurture their intellectual, social, aesthetic, physical and spiritual abilities. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND, develop good skills, knowledge and understanding in many curriculum areas and through the enrichment provided by the extra-curricular programme. Pupils are highly articulate and keen to express their views. For example, they confidently voiced their opinions in a debate on the painting styles of famous artists. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and are receptive towards the opinions of their peers. They read aloud fluently, with good intonation and expression. Pupils take great pride in presenting their written work neatly. Pupils strongly embrace opportunities to reason and use logical thought. In English, they ably analyse text to depict the personalities of characters. Pupils have strong numeric understanding and can apply mathematical concepts adeptly to other areas of their work. For example in drama, younger pupils use their knowledge of division to split the class into groups. Pupils of all ages demonstrate strong creative ability, as exemplified by the colourful displays of their work around the school. In information and communication technology, (ICT) pupils show good levels of competency, such as researching and adapting images to use in a presentation program. Pupils' physical skills are highly developed through their participation in a wide range of physical activities, which they greatly enjoy.
- 3.3 A good majority of pupils achieve notable success in external music, speech and drama examinations, local sporting events and both local and national competitions. Older pupils are successful in gaining places at their chosen senior schools, with a good proportion attaining academic, musical and sporting scholarships and awards.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, when considered with evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny and interviews with pupils demonstrates that the vast majority make good progress overall in their learning, when compared with pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND and those with English as an additional language (EAL) make excellent progress from their individual starting points because of the additional teaching support that they receive in their learning. These effective intervention measures help them to develop the necessary skills in understanding and application, enabling them to participate fully in lessons. Extension activities to extend reasoning and thinking skills, while less prominent in practice, enable more able pupils to make sound progress in relation to their abilities.
- 3.5 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They are co-operative, concentrate well on their work and are keen to make progress and extend their learning. Pupils behave in an extremely positive manner at all times and are proud of their personal achievements and the successes of their peers.

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

- 3.6 The quality of the curriculum and extra curriculum provision is good.

- 3.7 The curriculum effectively meets the school's aims and covers all the requisite areas of learning well. At all stages its content is suitable for pupils' abilities and needs, providing them with opportunity to participate in a broad range of subjects, including music, drama, dance, art and a wide range of sporting activities. Excellent curriculum provision is provided for pupils with SEND and EAL. Individual educational plans (IEP's) are highly detailed and effectively disseminated amongst teaching staff to ensure a consistent approach to teaching. A comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is taught throughout the school, which links extremely well with the school's aims.
- 3.8 In the younger age groups, there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the skills of the pupils are well developed. French is taught from the earliest years in the EYFS and Latin is provided as an option for younger pupils in the prep school, becoming a timetabled allocation for the oldest pupils. Outdoor learning activities, in the form of woodland activities, have been recently introduced for the youngest pupils to enrich their learning. As pupils move through the school, there is increased subject specialism, which links effectively with the curriculum provision appropriate for their ages and that taught in their chosen senior schools. Cross-curricular links are good in some subjects. For example, a drama lesson combined numeracy and literacy skills. All pupils have timetabled lessons for the library and ICT suite, which facilitate adequate scope for cross-curricular learning and research.
- 3.9 The curriculum planning for individual lessons is strong. Schemes of work are well detailed and identify stages in curriculum progression effectively.
- 3.10 Pupils greatly enjoy an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, both at lunchtime and after school. The programme includes activities such as bike-ability, machine sewing, textiles and art. The curriculum benefits considerably from the enrichment that these activities provide; all of them make a highly effective contribution towards the pupils' overall development. Displays throughout the school reflect their importance and success. Additionally, the excellent weekly enrichment programme provides a further rich scope of learning experiences, such as 'Think' (debating and philosophy), boot camp and cooking. As a result, pupils have significant opportunity to develop their creative and performing skills. They can play a variety of instruments, sing in one of the four school choirs and contribute towards various school ensembles such as Yazz Jazz. An exciting sports' programme ensures pupils have the opportunity to participate in football, rugby, hockey, netball, tennis, rounders, athletics and swimming; fixtures are regularly played in all these sports against other schools. The school provides good quality extended care for all children from EYFS upwards.
- 3.11 Pupils benefit from effective links in the extended community. Visitors such as the local clergy and guest speakers share their interests, cultures and professional knowledge, effectively enriching pupils' curriculum experiences. A wealth of educational workshops and visits, both day and residential, such as an annual trip to France, provide pupils with a good breadth of additional challenge.

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

- 3.12 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.13 Teaching is effective in achieving the school's aim to give instruction in the basic skills through the most effective methods available. Lessons are often delivered with enthusiasm and the pupils derive enjoyment from a range of learning activities.

Since the previous inspection, a clear marking policy has been designed and agreed. However, its implementation is currently inconsistent and not yet fully established across the full range of subjects and year groups. In the best examples, comments within workbooks provide helpful guidance for improvement, although the use of written target setting to provide pupils with a clear indication of their future learning is less well developed. Teachers make good use of assessment data to track pupils' progress, which effectively monitors progress and helps to plan future learning.

- 3.14 The best lessons start punctually and efficiently, leading to strong progress from the outset. Planning for lessons is thorough and offers a good range of activities for most abilities. Most lessons have good pace, although on some occasions, over lengthy teacher introductions limit pupils' progress and engagement. Opportunities for independent working, cooperative activities and small group work are often effectively created, which promotes pupils' good progress, creativity and enthusiasm well. However, on some occasions, independence is not encouraged, particularly in lessons which comprise a large amount of input from the teacher. Good self-evaluation systems, encouraging pupils to measure their own progress and understanding, such as a 'traffic light' system, are used in many subjects. This provides teachers with additional helpful insight into pupils' understanding and effectively supports planning for future lessons.
- 3.15 The needs of pupils with SEND and/or EAL are appropriately identified and extremely well catered for within lesson planning documentation. The provision is less effective for more able pupils, such as those who are identified as gifted or talented because extension work is not always provided. The teaching for pupils with SEND and/or EAL is a particularly strong feature. Teachers adjust their methodology effectively to ensure maximum progress for these pupils. Information from pupils' individual education plans (IEPs), such as those with SEND and/or EAL, is clearly incorporated into lesson activities for learning, providing high quality support for their individual needs.
- 3.16 Teachers make good use of the resources available to them. A number of lessons successfully incorporate ICT and use of the library, although the availability of these resources for pupils to undertake their own independent research is more limited. Teaching assistants enhance support teaching in lessons although this additional input is not always fully utilised.
- 3.17 Teaching demonstrates strong subject knowledge, helping to promote pupils' interest and stimulation in many areas. Staff make excellent use of praise and encouragement to develop the pupils' confidence; relationships between teachers and pupils are particularly strong. Excellent learning behaviour is encouraged and maintained. A small minority of pupils in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses felt that they do not always receive the individual help they need and that homework does not help them to learn. The Inspection did not find any evidence to support these views. During discussions, pupils felt homework levels were appropriate and that staff did provide them with good quality help and support. Teachers demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the pupils in their classes and this greatly enhances the learning experience for the 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 pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim to instil in pupils a sense of decency, commitment, self-reliance, responsibility, respect for others and healthy self-esteem.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual awareness is extremely strong. They develop a broad spiritual knowledge and understanding within the Christian ethos of the school and beyond. Visiting speakers reinforce and extend pupils' spiritual understanding, such as through discussions on Bible stories, the Coptic Church of Egypt and Diwali. Pupils of all ages are extremely confident and emotionally mature for their age. There are many opportunities for them to be reflective and to consider the non-material aspects of life, such as during a period of two-minute silence on Remembrance Day, when pupils demonstrated considerable empathy.
- 4.4 Pupils have excellent standards of moral development. They behave in an exemplary manner and demonstrate a mature understanding of the rules of the community. Pupils show a keen sense of right and wrong and appreciate the importance of friendliness, polite manner and good behaviour. They have an excellent understanding of self-discipline and a strong sense of teamwork and empathy. For example, pupils speak enthusiastically about the impact of their positive behaviour and good efforts which support the school house system, known as 'Tribes'. In an assembly to support children's charities around the world, pupils clearly showed great concern as they considered the effect of worldly occurrences on the less fortunate, in comparison to their own lives.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate outstanding social awareness. From the very youngest age, pupils enjoy accepting responsibility and understand the contribution they make towards the warmth of the community. Pupils learn the value of being responsible citizens who show respect and tolerance, as well as considering the needs of others. In lessons, pupils listened to one another and respected the points of view of their peers, illustrating their fundamental understanding of democracy. Pupils have a mature understanding of community support and raise considerable funds for both local and national charities.
- 4.6 Pupils show an excellent appreciation of their own and other cultures. Pupils' develop strong cultural tolerance and understanding through the excellent PSHE programme and curriculum enrichment. Additionally they learn to respect other faiths and beliefs through visits from speakers who share their traditions and experiences. Pupils gain a strong insight into the roles of public institutions through trips to museums, places of cultural heritage and regular visits from professionals, such as representatives from the emergency services. All of these significantly help to develop the pupil's life skills and appreciation of the differences between people. Pupils demonstrate a lively interest in global issues through links with schools in France and Africa. Members of the Eco Club make an excellent contribution towards the support of charities abroad.
- 4.7 By the time they leave the school, pupils personal development is excellent. This is evident in their confident, mature and graceful attitude.

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

- 4.8 The arrangements for the pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.9 High levels of pastoral guidance and support from teachers results in pupils feeling secure and happy. Consequently, the school successfully fulfils its aim of creating a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere, nurturing the best relationships at all levels. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Regular and efficient communication between the staff, combined with excellent pastoral records, ensure a thorough focus on the individual needs of each pupil. Pupils interact well with one another, know who to approach if they have concerns and value the 'buddy system' involving the pairing up of new pupils with more senior pupils.
- 4.10 The excellent PSHE programme, alongside a number of other channels, effectively supports pupils' understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and the importance of good eating choices. Extremely good opportunities exist for regular exercise, such as break times, activities and physical education lessons.
- 4.11 The school's anti-bullying procedures provide strong guidance to both staff and pupils. The anti-bullying week provides additional support strategies for pupils. Golden rules to promote positive behaviour are posted in all classrooms. A very small minority of respondents to both pupil and parent questionnaires expressed concerns over the school's handling of bullying. Inspection evidence does not support these views. During interviews, pupils say that bullying is extremely rare and are confident that the staff would swiftly address any incidences. Additionally, in pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a few pupils cited the fairness of sanctions. Inspectors found no evidence to support this. Behaviour records clearly document sanctions, which are fair and appropriate and take due count of any related difficulty or disability. During discussions, pupils considered both sanctions and rewards to be fairly administered.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.13 Pupils' response to questionnaires responses indicate that a small minority feel that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Inspectors' evidence does not support this. The School Council meets very regularly and enables a positive forum for pupils to voice their ideas and views and furthermore, they feel the school listens to them. The heads of school and house captains take an active interest in the well-being of all pupils, including the very youngest.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety are sound.
- 4.15 The school effectively implements a range of policies to ensure the health and safety of both pupils and staff. The recent updated child protection policy now has the correct regard to the official guidance for safeguarding children. All staff attend regular training updates in child protection and designated leaders have undertaken appropriate advanced training. Staff have a strong understanding about safeguarding procedures and know what to do should they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. All staff have now been appropriately checked for their suitability to work with children, although in the past some statutory checks were not undertaken in advance of teaching staff beginning work at the school. The school has acted swiftly to rectify all these oversights. Induction processes for new staff are thorough, ensuring they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

- 4.16 All necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are rigorously undertaken. Fire drills take place regularly and are suitably recorded. Appropriate checks on fire systems and electrical appliances by external specialists are carried out regularly. The school premises are well maintained and well-detailed risk assessments cover the whole school's facilities, educational trips and activities. Prompt action is taken to rectify any identified maintenance concerns.
- 4.17 Excellent provision is made for pupils who are ill or injured in school. Records for medical administration and accidents, no matter how minor, are comprehensive. Staff are extremely well informed about pupils' individual needs, including those with SEND. Most staff are suitably trained in first aid and a significant number have paediatric first aid qualifications. Pupils are extremely well supervised by staff at all times to ensure their safety.
- 4.18 The admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained and suitably archived.

## **5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 The proprietor, along with two family members, who are co-directors, have suitable oversight of all sections of the school, in line with the founding aims and precepts. A Board of Reference, which is non-proprietary, has recently been formed to provide further support and guidance for senior leaders, the proprietor and directors. Board members have a wide range of expertise and offer appropriate levels of challenge and stimulus for the school's growth and improvement.
- 5.3 The proprietor and directors maintain strong involvement in the school's operation and direction. Through prudent financial and strategic planning, there has been significant investment in good quality staff, resources and improvements to the educational accommodation. Recent improvements include the building of an outdoor education centre and new classroom areas, which have had a notable impact on the breadth of pupils' learning. Board meetings and attendance at school events provide the governance at all levels with a good insight into the school's working. The responsibility of the school's educational direction is largely delegated to the school's senior leadership, who meets regularly with the proprietor to ensure that information about the school's day-to-day operation is cohesively communicated.
- 5.4 The proprietor and directors suitably discharge their responsibilities for health, safety and pupil welfare. However, the responsibilities of governance relating to recruitment and vetting checks have not been consistently implemented to ensure that they reflect recent statutory guidance and regulations. All levels of governance periodically scrutinise policies and procedures, including those updated during the inspection. The annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements has been appropriately undertaken and recorded.

### **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 of the school demonstrates a strong commitment towards the achievement of the school's aims, in providing an environment that encourages the educational and personal development of all pupils so that they will learn to take their place in society. Since the previous inspection, there has been significant recent change in the school's senior leadership, away from sole proprietary direction. Following a recommendation from the previous inspection, the senior management structure has been redefined to enable a greater clarity of individual roles and responsibilities. This now provides a consistently strong sense of educational direction, as reflected in the good levels of pupils' academic achievement and the excellent levels of their personal development. Senior leaders and managers have established a regular programme of policy review to fulfil their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, although its effectiveness is still inconsistent.

- 5.7 Teamwork is strong. Staff work closely together with pupils' interests at heart. Regular staff meetings facilitate well-focused discussions on both the school's provision and the individual pastoral and educational needs of the pupils, including those with SEND and/or EAL. Rigorous self-evaluation enables the accurate identification of the school's strengths and priorities for future improvement. Senior leaders meet regularly with subject managers to evaluate the curriculum direction. These elements are incorporated successfully into strategic planning, which illustrates a clear vision for the school's future development. Documentation is regularly monitored by leadership to ensure that targets are achievable and followed through to their successful conclusion.
- 5.8 The school is successful in recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff. All new staff undergo a thorough induction process, which includes training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The school has suitable procedures in place for checking the suitability of staff, volunteers and governors. However, these systems do not fully reflect the most recent additions to regulatory recruitment procedures, resulting in some teaching staff being appointed and starting work before the correct checks had been carried out. By the end of the inspection, the school had taken all the necessary steps to correct matters and to ensure recruitment stringency in the future.
- 5.9 Staff have good opportunities for professional development and to extend their educational expertise to benefit the best outcomes for all pupils. Following a recommendation at the previous inspection, an effective appraisal system has been introduced for all staff, which includes regular observations to monitor the quality of teaching, and meetings with senior managers to discuss performance and educational practice. Regular training updates and clearly defined job descriptions provide effective support for staff in meeting the needs of all pupils and ensure that there is a clear and consistent approach to safeguarding children, keeping them safe and providing for their welfare needs. Further documentation, such as the staff handbook, provides staff with comprehensive guidance on school protocol and routines.
- 5.10 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents, in accordance with its aims, and the parents are extremely happy with the school's leadership and management and educational provision for their children. They particularly appreciate the school's timely responses to questions and concerns in accordance with its published procedures; additionally, during discussions parents spoke warmly of the ease of contact via email with the school and the welcoming rapidity of replies to any queries.
- 5.11 Parents are given many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. An active parents' organisation, 'The Friends of Yarrells' organises social fixtures that are enjoyable social events for both parents and pupils. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires and during discussions, the vast majority of parents agreed that the school encourages them to be involved in its life and work; inspectors concur with these views.
- 5.12 New parents are provided with a welcome pack that contains a wealth of useful information. The website and prospectus provide prospective parents with a thorough introduction to the school's philosophy and educational experience, including all the policies that are required. A range of policies and procedures are readily available to all parents, both current and prospective. Parents also receive informative weekly newsletters and year group emails celebrating achievements and



publicising events. 'The Yarrells Yearbook' is a high quality record of the year's achievements. The school's social media page provides an up-to-date account of activities and photographs that enable parents to gain excellent insight into the events and activities taking place at the school.

- 5.13 Parents are encouraged to develop a partnership with the school in order to enhance the education for their children. The school has an 'open door' policy that facilitates parents with opportunities for frequent discussion about their child's progress. Additionally, formal parents meetings take place regularly to review progress and achievement. Comprehensive and thorough reports not only describe pupils' progress but also frequently suggest ways that parents can support their children.

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

## **6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

- 6.1 The school makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including those with SEND, EAL and those of high ability. The youngest children make at least the expected levels in their development, and by the end of their year in reception, many older children exceed these expectations.
- 6.2 Highly qualified and well-motivated staff provide excellent support for the children in their care. They skilfully use the children's interests to devise exciting learning activities, such as constructing sunflowers with an exact number of seeds. Staff successfully nurture the relationships between the very youngest and slightly older children by joining the groups together so that they can explore and participate in a richer variety of activities. These valuable approaches help children to acquire the necessary skills to succeed, such as confidence and independence, which prepare them extremely well for their next phases in learning.
- 6.3 Staff set high expectations for the children. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of how children learn and ensure that activities are exciting and challenging experiences, which motivate and enthuse children. They teach reading skills to older children, using an effective multi-sensory approach and help younger children to develop good writing techniques by encouraging them to hold pencils and crayons correctly in preparation. At all stages staff skilfully incorporate numeracy skills, such as counting and number recognition, into many activities.
- 6.4 Staff regularly observe children as they play, which contributes to thorough assessment processes. These systems provide the basis for well-focused support for any required interventions, particularly in the areas of language and communication, helping children to make rapid improvement whatever their starting points.
- 6.5 Staff work in partnership to help children settle. Parents have many informal channels of communication, such as daily conversations with staff, which keeps them informed about their child's next stages in learning. Parents attend formal meetings to discuss their child's learning and development, including those following assessments for children age two and at the end of the reception year. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, all parents were extremely pleased with the breadth of educational experiences and the support that children receive for their learning.

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

- 6.6 The contribution for children's well-being is outstanding.
- 6.7 All staff know the children extremely well. The youngest children demonstrate warm emotional bonds with the adults who look after them. They are both happy and confident, and are learning to behave well through strategies, which effectively promote their attention and listening skills. All children successfully develop

confidence both with adults and other children. Older children support and praise each other and younger children are developing their understanding of the importance of sharing and taking turns.

- 6.8 Activities that promote learning and challenge, both indoors and outdoors, allow children to exercise a degree of choice over what they do, such as devising their own data collection surveys. Children have excellent opportunities to use their imagination. Older children use junk modelling materials to construct emergency vehicles and younger children enact their personal experiences during role-play activities, such as pretending to make a cup of tea.
- 6.9 Staff are aware of children's likes and dislikes, and meticulous attention is paid to any dietary or medical needs. The children understand that healthy food provides the energy they need for their active day. Younger children enjoy eating in the family atmosphere of the nursery; older children feel part of the wider school community when they eat in the main dining room. All meals are tasty and nutritious and children's good manners are encouraged through stickers and praise.
- 6.10 Careful attention is paid to all safety routines. Outside and inside areas are checked daily and any hazards quickly addressed. The younger children who cannot yet manage their own hygiene needs are helped sensitively and the majority quickly attain independence in this area. The spacious, well-organised outdoor areas facilitate excellent opportunities for children to enjoy fresh air and exercise each day.
- 6.11 Children are well prepared for their transitions to other classes as they meet other adults and older pupils in assemblies and in specialist classes such as ICT.

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

- 6.12 Leadership and management of the EYFS is good.
- 6.13 Leaders demonstrate a strong knowledge of the learning and welfare requirements, to create an environment which is welcoming, safe and stimulating. Monitoring and evaluation systems ensure that the educational programmes are implemented thoroughly. Rigorous training procedures ensure that all staff are familiar with the welfare systems and protocols.
- 6.14 Governors show an active interest in the early years and undertake the necessary responsibility for welfare and safeguarding. No breaches in statutory requirements, relating to recruitment checks for staff before they begin work in the EYFS were noted.. All discrepancies relating to checks for staff in other parts of the school had been correctly rectified by the close of the inspection.
- 6.15 Staff have a strong commitment to providing the highest levels of achievement for all children in their care. Leaders have a focussed commitment towards a drive for improvement, such as a recent exercise to monitor all aspects of provision for the younger children. They have have used this as a basis for future developments.
- 6.16 A suitable programme of professional development enables staff to improve their practice to benefit the children. Leaders regularly observe staff and discuss practice improvement strategies, although these systems lack the formality of regular individual meetings with all staff to ensure full effectiveness.
- 6.17 Highly effective targeted interventions are in place for children with SEND. Specialist staff provide successful one-to-one support, which includes active

partnerships with parents, enabling children's learning to be accelerated. Staff seek support, advice and resources from outside agencies such as speech and language therapists when required.

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

- 6.18 The overall quality and standards of the EYFS is good.
- 6.19 All children, including those who require additional support, feel safe, are happy and enjoy their learning. They make excellent progress relative to their varied starting points. Children with SEND and/or EAL receive excellent support, both through individual sessions and class provision.
- 6.20 The youngest children confidently use paintbrushes, listen to stories and count the number in sequence to 10. Older children read well using their knowledge of sounds and write letters. They count, and do simple addition, using mathematical symbols correctly. Children have a good understanding of ICT and can use the mouse to draw poppies.
- 6.21 Children are confident when talking to adults and each other, reflecting how comfortable and secure they feel. Behaviour is excellent, maintained by positive rather than negative comments, which effectively motivates children to learn. Older children enjoy the responsibility of being leader of the day.
- 6.22 Staff have a thorough knowledge of safeguarding and welfare procedures. Breaches in recruitment regulations identified in other parts of the school, and rectified before the end of the inspection do not impact negatively on children's safety. Regular discussion takes place to identify ways to continue to enhance the education and experience of the children in its care.
- 6.23 The leadership effectively demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous improvement to ensure the best outcomes for children. The recommendation from the previous inspection has been successfully addressed; all children in the EYFS have excellent opportunities to develop their own learning experiences.

#### **Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three**

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

**Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.**