



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
BIRKDALE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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Birkdale Preparatory School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Birkdale Preparatory School
DfE Number	373/6005
Registered Charity Number	1018973
Address	Birkdale Preparatory School Clarke House Clarke Drive Sheffield South Yorkshire S10 2NS England
Telephone Number	0114 267 0407
Fax Number	0114 268 2929
Email Address	prepschool@birkdalschool.org.uk
Head	Mr Chris Burch
Chair of Governors	Dr John Goepel
Age Range	4 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	274
Gender of Pupils	Boys
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS): 34 5-11: 240
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 274
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Kirsty Massey
EYFS Gender	Boys
Inspection Dates	23 Feb 2016 to 26 Feb 2016

PREFACE

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI standard inspection was in February 2010.

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 children aged under two), 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 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 Graham Gorton

Mr Ian Adams

Mrs Joy Gatenby

Mrs Kathryn Henry

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Former head, GSA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Birkdale Preparatory School is a day school for boys and is situated to the west of central Sheffield. The school was originally founded in 1904 as a boarding school for boys up to the age of 13. It expanded from 1978 onwards to accommodate pupils up to the age of 18, and now has a co-educational sixth form. The senior school, for boys between the ages of 11 and 18, together with sixth-form girls, is now known as Birkdale School; the school for younger boys is now known as Birkdale Preparatory School. As a charitable trust, the entire school has one governing body.
- 1.2 The preparatory school moved to its present separate site, Clarke House, near the Botanical Gardens in 1988, and is now a day school for 274 boys aged 4 to 11. In September 2014 the pre-prep department moved to Belmayne House, a property adjacent to Clarke House; it includes 34 Reception pupils, who form the Early Years Foundation Stage, together with pupils from the age of five to the age of seven. Since the previous inspection, a new administrative reception area has been built and Clarke House has undergone significant refurbishment. The senior school has remained on the original site.
- 1.3 The Christian faith is of central importance and, stemming from this, the school's core values are care and respect for all, commitment to each other and to the school, and the pursuit and celebration of excellence. The aim is to give all pupils a strong academic education, while developing them as individuals prepared for their wider role as responsible citizens willing to serve the community.
- 1.4 There are 65 pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly originating from India and Pakistan. Most pupils live within a 20-mile radius and come mainly from professional and business families. The ability profile of the school is judged to be above that of the national average.
- 1.5 The school has identified six pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and a further 22 who receive school support with some aspect of their learning. None has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The school has 13 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), one of whom is at an early stage of language acquisition.

- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its NC equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
PP1	Reception

Pre-preparatory

School	NC name
PP2	Year 1
PP3	Year 2

Preparatory School

School	NC name
P1	Year 3
P2	Year 4
P3	Year 5
P4	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, pupils are extremely well educated in accordance with the school aims. Pupils are both confident and competent right across the curriculum as reflected in their excellent levels of achievement. Pupils achieve highly in a wide range of extra-curricular activities with notable success in games, music, art and quizzes. The curriculum and extra-curricular provision throughout the school is excellent providing a rich variety of learning opportunities. Teaching across the school is excellent and has improved since the previous inspection. The best teaching is delivered with pace, flair and enthusiasm fully captivating the pupils and encouraging them to give of their best. Pupils of all ages, have an extremely positive attitude towards their studies. They enjoy the challenges set before them and work most effectively on collaborative tasks. The pupils' love of learning is a significant contributory factor to their excellent levels of achievement.
- 2.2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, including in the EYFS, is excellent. They are confident, showing high levels of self-esteem. Pupils demonstrate a strong moral understanding and their mature social awareness is reflected in their excellent contributions to both the school and wider community. Pupils are culturally aware, which is reflected in their respect and tolerance for those whose backgrounds may be different to their own. The pastoral care of the pupils is good. The strong bonds which exist between staff and pupils encourage positive, open dialogue. However, the school has no formal systems by which the views and opinions of pupils can be shared. Current arrangements for ensuring staff adopt a consistent approach to behavioural matters are not sufficiently rigorous. There are also inconsistencies in the manner in which rewards and sanctions are given to pupils. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good. Throughout the school policies and procedures are generally implemented effectively and associated record keeping is good. However, fire drills are not carried out early enough in the school year.
- 2.3 There is good governance across the school. Governors know the school well and are actively involved in many aspects of its work. Their oversight of all school matters is thorough, although they do not carry out a formal performance review of the most senior leaders. The school facilities have been significantly improved since the previous inspection with new classrooms and administrative centres. School leadership and management is good. Leaders show a keen desire to drive the school forward and ensure that the pupils' achievement is of the highest order. However, their oversight of some pastoral matters is not sufficiently comprehensive. The role of the subject coordinators has been strengthened and they are now more effective in the oversight of teaching. Since the previous inspection policies and procedures have been standardised across the school. In the EYFS, there are no supervision meetings in place where staff have the time to discuss any concerns, worries and constraints within their role and the setting as a whole. The school, including in the EYFS, enjoys excellent links with parents, carers and guardians.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure management have effective oversight of behavioural concerns and implement a consistent approach to the giving of sanctions and rewards.
2. Develop formal ways in which the ideas and opinions of pupils can be heard and shared throughout the school.
3. Establish a system for governors to carry out a performance review of the most senior leaders.
4. In the EYFS, formalise arrangements for supervision meetings.

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' achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils throughout the school are extremely well educated, fully meeting the aim of the school to provide a Christian community that pursues and celebrates excellence.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS achieve highly. They make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. This is particularly the case with their speaking and listening skills and their mathematical development. All children listen attentively to one another during 'show-and-tell' time and when working collaboratively using self-selected resources. They think critically and respond with great enthusiasm to the challenge of problem solving activities, for example when investigating how to build a garage to house a toy car using three dimensional shapes. Many children count to 100 and are beginning to develop an awareness of number patterns. They use and understand a wide range of mathematical vocabulary when discussing the properties of shapes and when working with number. In literacy, more able children apply their phonic knowledge to write short sentences independently and most children identify initial sounds and attempt to record simple words. Most children, including those with SEND and EAL, reach at least the expected levels of development and a significant number exceed them in many areas of learning.
- 3.4 From an early age in the pre-prep, pupils develop strong literacy skills which are successfully built upon as they move through the school. They are articulate and listen both carefully and respectfully to the views and opinions of others. Their reading skills are well developed and they enjoy reading, both for pleasure and for the retrieval of information. Younger pupils have a thorough understanding of the rules of spelling and sentence construction and they apply these well to all their writing. Older pupils write fluently for a wide variety of purposes, including story work, poetry and factual accounts. Their writing shows flair, imagination and a great attention to detail. Pupils have excellent mathematical skills and they learn to apply these effectively. They demonstrate logical thought and a thorough understanding of computational work. Pupils have highly developed creative skills as shown in the excellent quality of their work in music, art and drama. From an early age, pupils develop advanced physical skills through their play and through the opportunity to participate in games and physical education (PE). Older pupils involve themselves fully in sporting opportunities and develop strong sets of skills in a wide variety of games and activities.
- 3.5 The excellent achievement of the pupils is reflected in their success at the point of secondary transfer. Most pupils move successfully into the senior school with a good number receiving awards and scholarships. Sporting achievements are extensive in many team games such as rugby, cricket and football, where they have enjoyed considerable success in local, regional and national competitions. Individual success in sports, is also strong, with pupils representing both the county and region, for example in cricket, basketball and equestrianism. Pupils are successful in local, regional and national art competitions and exhibitions. They achieve highly in examinations in music and this is reflected in the quality of music groups and choirs. The dramatic prowess of the pupils is shown in the high quality of school productions and in their success in drama examinations. The pupils' participation and success in quizzes in topics such as science and general

knowledge are considerable. Pupils with SEND achieve highly through the careful and tailored support that is provided by the school.

- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national data but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence, consisting of lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' written work and interviews with pupils, confirms this judgement. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make at least a good, and for some an excellent, rate of progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND and EAL make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported by the school. Those with specific talents achieve highly and good progress is made by the more able. In questionnaires an overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with the progress that their child makes at the school. An overwhelming majority of pupils feel that they make good progress.
- 3.7 The pupils display an excellent attitude towards their learning. They are always keen to give of their best and they have a hard-working and purposeful approach to all their studies. Pupils relish the challenges of the school day and are full of enthusiasm. They work well together and show a mature approach to co-operative learning.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 In the EYFS the excellent provision is most effective in meeting the needs of all the children. They have a wide variety of opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, to explore their environment and engage in independent learning. Classrooms are richly resourced and stimulate children's creative thinking and investigative approaches to learning. There is a highly effective focus on the development of children's communication skills and they are encouraged to give reasoned explanations for their thinking. An appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensures that a wide range of challenge is available to all the children. In response to the recommendation from the previous inspection, staff have developed planning for the outdoor environment. This planning is well thought through and designed to promote children's development across all areas of learning. For example, each week children go outdoors to engage in activities that are planned to support the development of their mathematical understanding. Staff make learning enjoyable and this very strong provision enables children of all abilities to make good and often excellent progress relative to their starting points. The specialist teaching in music and Spanish significantly enhances children's learning experience.
- 3.10 In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum covers all of the requisite areas of learning and fully supports the aims of the schools. There is a wide range of subjects and learning experiences offered both within and beyond the curriculum and these support pupils in achieving their academic potential and fosters their love of learning. The excellent programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PHSEE) helps nurture pupils' personal growth. Pupils' economic awareness is developed through elements of the PSHEE syllabus and activities such as the Enterprise Initiative and workshops run as part of the Year 6 leavers' programme.
- 3.11 The curriculum is further enhanced by the inclusion of Spanish, French, swimming and drama. Almost all parents feel that their child is offered an appropriate range of subjects and experiences. Specialist teaching strengthens the curriculum in a range

of subjects including PE, history, geography, modern foreign languages, art, design and technology, music, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education (RE) and science. Pupils with SEND or EAL are particularly well supported through the use of teaching assistants in class and withdrawal for individual lessons with specialists.

- 3.12 A number of lunch-time and after-school clubs have an academic emphasis and support the curriculum well. These include Chinese culture, intellectual curiosity, science club and languages club. There is also a wide range of musical and sporting opportunities. Information and communication technology is used and applied effectively across a range of subjects as well as in discrete lessons. Cross-curricular links are regularly in evidence, for example when English and history are combined during a topic on castles, making the learning experience more meaningful for the pupils. Excellent facilities in the pre-prep enhance the ability to teach specialist and creative lessons in subject specific spaces. While some use is made of the surrounding environment, such as the nearby botanical gardens, regular outdoor learning does not feature strongly within the curriculum.
- 3.13 The carefully planned curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. The provision for SEND and EAL pupils is a notable strength. More able children are also extended effectively, such as in science where secondary school texts and resources are used to meet their needs. This additional provision is enhanced by ability setting in a range of subjects from Year 3. The curriculum is carefully designed and short term planning is exceptionally thorough. A consideration of political issues is delivered in a balanced and appropriate way. The curricular provision is regularly reviewed.
- 3.14 The curriculum is supported well by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and strong links with the community. These include off-site visits to historical and geographical sites of interest, residential trips from Year 4, drama productions, competitive quizzes, church visits as well as special themed days, charity events or visiting speakers. There is a broad offering of additional clubs and activities that meet the creative, cerebral and physical interests of the pupils. An overwhelming majority of pupils and a very large majority of parents feel that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 In the EYFS, all staff have a detailed knowledge of the children, which ensures that the support and encouragement provided promotes learning. Many practical activities using high quality resources are planned to encourage children to investigate materials and be creative in their use of them. Skilful open-ended questioning, tailored to the needs of different groups of children, supports new learning and develops children's thinking skills. Staff have high expectations of all children and the pace and challenge evident in all teacher-led activities motivates children and sustains their interest and involvement. Regular and rigorous assessment practices are used effectively to ascertain the development of children's skills and understanding and to successfully identify the next steps in their learning.
- 3.17 Throughout the rest of the school, teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' progress and fully supports the aims of the school in providing a strong academic

education in a caring and respectful environment. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

- 3.18 Lesson planning is exceptional, stating clear learning objectives and reflecting the varying needs of pupils. Teachers know their pupils very well and employ a range of strategies to ensure that all pupils, including the most able, achieve their very best.
- 3.19 Marking is of a consistently high standard with constructive and detailed comments providing pupils with guidance for improvement. Individual target setting is used to good effect to help pupils make more rapid progress, and pupils enjoy the challenge this presents. The school has introduced a new system of assessment which provides staff with valuable information on individual pupils' attainment and progress; this is used to effectively inform their planning and teaching. A simple tracking system enables the progress of pupils to be monitored over time and this is helpful in identifying areas where intervention would be beneficial. The strengthening of the subject co-ordinator's role since the previous inspection has led to effective oversight of the quality of teaching and marking.
- 3.20 Throughout the school, teachers show a high level of subject knowledge and employ a variety of exciting teaching methods to inspire their pupils and promote excellent progress. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk, providing opportunities for pupils to work both co-operatively and independently. Excellent questioning techniques and open-ended tasks extend pupils' thinking and provide appropriate challenge. In the small proportion of lessons which are less successful, a slower pace and an over-emphasis on teacher-led activities limits pupils' learning. Teachers use a variety of stimulating, good quality resources, including effective use of interactive whiteboards, hand-held tablets and visual aids.
- 3.21 Teaching focuses successfully on styles which suit the learning style of boys. For example, more varied and practical tasks, use of inspiring visual aids, smaller 'bites' of learning, connecting with boys' interests and the use of self and peer assessment. This is proving highly successful and its effectiveness is seen in the high levels of engagement by pupils and in their obvious enjoyment of learning. Lessons are thoughtfully planned and tasks are matched to pupils' abilities ensuring all pupils can make at least good, and often excellent progress. Many tasks are investigative and open-ended, which enables pupils to work at a level appropriate to their abilities yet provides challenge for all. Excellent use is made of a strong team of teaching assistants, who offer effective support to all pupils including those with SEND, EAL, and the more able.
- 3.22 Tolerance and respect for others is promoted through the high standards of behaviour expected and seen in classrooms. Pupils listen attentively to the views and ideas of others, respond appropriately and show genuine support for each other.
- 3.23 In questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils felt that homework did not help them to learn. However, a review of homework tasks showed that work is generally matched well to the needs and ages of the pupils. A very large majority of pupils feel that their teachers help them to learn, they feel their work is interesting and that they take responsibility for their own 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 the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Children in the EYFS develop excellent personal and social skills as they learn to cooperate and share, join in activities and work in pairs. Their relationships with the staff and also with other children are strong and reflect their growing confidence. They demonstrate the capacity to respect and tolerate others' views and attitudes, reflecting fundamental British values; they show a very well-developed ability to make appropriate choices and decisions. The high priority given to listening to one another develops children's ability to appreciate different points of view and an understanding that they need to consider the feelings of others. The 'Golden Rules' provide a framework for discussion to successfully guide them in their actions. Arrangements for children's transition into the school are excellent. Several organised events ensure that both children and their families feel welcome and are prepared well for life at Birkdale. The close proximity of Year 1 to the Reception classes, and the many activities that involve the whole of the pre-prep, ensures that the transition into the next stage of their education is smooth.
- 4.3 From Year 1 upwards, a close alignment to the Christian values upheld by the school enables pupils to recognise the importance of British values and how they are relevant to their community. Pupils' understanding of these values is reinforced through the curriculum and in assemblies. Pupils develop an awareness of the democratic process as they move through the school, and their understanding of the judicial system and rule of law is enhanced through trips and visits. Tolerance and respect are ingrained in classroom practice and etiquette.
- 4.4 Pupils' excellent spiritual awareness is developed through the school's Christian principles. Their spirituality is further nurtured through the daily experience of assemblies where song, prayer and the opportunity to be reflective provide a calm and thoughtful start to the day. Pupils' spiritual understanding is heightened through opportunities to be reflective and to empathise with others; for example Year 6 pupils wrote poems relating to the suffering endured in the Sheffield Blitz. Pupils are confident and self-aware, and their high levels of maturity were evident in classroom discussions and in interviews with pupils. Their spiritual and aesthetic awareness is evident in their appreciation of the natural world around them and their responses to the many creative experiences they enjoy in school.
- 4.5 Pupils display strong moral values that are reflected in the high standards of behaviour and levels of courtesy consistently seen throughout the school. Their strong sense of morality recognises the importance of the prominently displayed 'Golden Rules' and school principles in maintaining a happy school community. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, are quick to recognise unacceptable behaviour in others and are willing to stand up for those encountering friendship difficulties. Pupils' moral development is strengthened by their understanding of the civil and criminal law of England which is developed in the course of PSHEE studies and supported by visiting speakers and school trips, including a visit to the local law courts.
- 4.6 The social development of the pupils is excellent, reflecting the supportive and respectful relationships enjoyed within school. Pupils' social awareness is developed as they take on school responsibilities such as classroom helpers and

prefects. They are proud of their school and enjoy the opportunity to contribute to it. Pupils are quick to respond to appeals to help those less fortunate than themselves and actively organise fundraising event for charities, reflecting the depth of their social awareness. Pupils display a good general knowledge of political issues and current affairs, for example an awareness of the impending EU referendum and elections in the USA.

- 4.7 Pupils' cultural awareness is strengthened by opportunities taken to draw parallels with other religions and to celebrate the festivals of other faiths as they arise. Pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is extended within the curriculum, for example learning about African life when studying African music. Their knowledge and understanding is further developed through visiting speakers and topics discussed in assemblies. Pupils' excellent cultural understanding is shown in the tolerance and respect they show for all people, irrespective of their background and circumstance.
- 4.8 Pupils leave the school as confident, self-aware and caring individuals who display strong moral values, a keen sense of social responsibility and a deep appreciation of the multi-cultural world in which they live.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.10 In the EYFS all staff, including key workers, work together to provide a very high standard of care and support in a happy and purposeful environment. Children behave well and they form positive relationships with one another and with the adults that work with them. The importance of developing healthy lifestyles is given high priority. The children bring fruit from home for their morning snack and at lunchtime they are encouraged to make healthy choices including eating fruit and vegetables. All children have opportunities for regular exercise including outdoor play, PE and swimming. Good hygiene practices are encouraged from the very beginning of children's time in school. They recognise the importance of washing their hands before eating.
- 4.11 From Year 1 the staff continue to provide good support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school's aims. Strong relationships between pupils and staff are a key feature of the pastoral care. Class teachers know the pupils well and provide effective support and guidance, willingly giving up their free time to support them. Staff briefings, form meetings and management meetings provide opportunities for pastoral issues and concerns to be raised and shared by staff. In questionnaires a very small minority of pupils felt that teachers did not show concern for them as a person. During interviews a very small minority of pupils indicated that they were not always comfortable going to some staff members when a pastoral issue arose. However, other inspection evidence reinforced the strength of the pupil/teacher relationship and the considerable level of trust therein.
- 4.12 A balanced lunch menu caters for a number of specific dietary requirements and includes nutritious, freshly cooked food with a choice of main courses, salads and desserts. Pupils are encouraged to make healthy choices in the selection of their meals. A wide variety of opportunities are available for pupils to take regular exercise through curricular and extra-curricular sporting activities.
- 4.13 The school promotes good behaviour and guards against harassment and bullying, including cyber-bullying. In questionnaires, a few pupils felt that the school did not deal effectively with any bullying that occurs. In interviews with both pupils and

parents, and through the scrutiny of records, inspection evidence showed that the school responds appropriately at such times. However, the school lacks comprehensive and consistent systems to oversee procedures. In questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils felt that teachers were not always fair in the way that they give rewards and sanctions. The scrutiny of records confirmed that the application of sanctions and rewards is not always consistent amongst staff. Furthermore there is insufficient formal oversight to enable effective tracking of pastoral issues and any subsequent action.

- 4.14 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.15 In pupils' questionnaires, a few pupils felt that the school does not ask for their opinions and respond to them. Whilst pupils have many opportunities to talk with staff and school leaders on a regular basis, there is no formal process to collect the views and opinions of pupils.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.17 Careful attention is given to the welfare, health and safety of children in the EYFS. All staff have recently completed up-to-date safeguarding training and all have a first-aid qualification. Relevant staff have a paediatric first-aid qualification. Accidents, illness and the administering of medication are all recorded appropriately and staff are aware of children with special dietary or medical needs. Risk assessments for activities in school and for outings are rigorous and undertaken regularly. Whilst there are no explicit arrangements to prevent radicalisation and extremism, staff are alert to the signs that would give cause for concern.
- 4.18 Throughout the rest of the school, responsibility for pupils' safety is taken seriously. In pre-inspection questionnaires, an overwhelming majority of parents said that their children felt safe at school and this was reaffirmed during interviews with pupils. The safeguarding policy and procedures are appropriately implemented and monitored effectively. All staff receive regular training in child protection and understand who to contact if they have concerns. Designated senior staff have developed strong relationships with local agencies and have appropriate updated training. Detailed child protection records are maintained. Minor clerical errors were found on the school's central register of appointments but these were immediately rectified. Staff and pupils have all received specific training to raise awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism and secure procedures are in place to vet and supervise visiting outside speakers. Measures to counter cyber-bullying are effective through the delivery of the PSHEE programme and school monitoring.
- 4.19 Effective arrangements for health and safety are monitored by the governor responsible for welfare, health and safety. The health and safety committee regularly reviews preventative measures and assesses potential risks. A few minor welfare, health and safety matters were raised during the inspection that were rectified immediately. Measures are in place to reduce risks of fire through thorough documentation and procedures. However, fire drills are not carried out early in the school year to enable pupils, particularly those new to the school, to fully understand procedures. Accidents and incidents are carefully recorded and patterns are analysed to ensure safety standards are maintained. Potentially hazardous substances are safely stored. Detailed risk assessments are carried out for trips.

- 4.20 Comfortable facilities are in place for pupils who are ill or injured. There is suitable provision for those pupils with SEND. The first-aid policy is suitable and sufficient staff are fully qualified to provide first aid. Medicines are securely kept. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governance, including for the EYFS, provides effective oversight of the school in keeping with the Christian ethos which underpins the school's aims. Governors have a clear vision for the future, ensuring that the achievement and personal development of the pupils is central to their commitment to school improvement.
- 5.3 Through their combined expertise and experience, governors effectively discharge their responsibilities for standards, financial planning, facilities and learning resources. Governors have recently worked closely with school leadership to create a new strategic development plan to ensure a clear vision for future development.
- 5.4 Governors know the school well, through regular visits, classroom observations, and attendance at school events. For all parts of the school, they take an interest in educational standards and pastoral matters. The governing body receives detailed reports from senior leaders and presentations from staff on key topics. Regular meetings between governors and school leaders ensure effective communications. There are specific designated governors for welfare, health and safety, SEND and safeguarding.
- 5.5 The chair of governors keeps in regular touch with the head, providing valuable support for improvement. However, there is currently no appropriate performance management arrangement in place to evaluate the work of the school's most senior leaders.
- 5.6 Governors, including in the EYFS, have a good working knowledge of the applicable regulatory policies and are committed to discharging their responsibilities for child protection and welfare, health and safety. Governors have received induction and safeguarding training and they monitor safeguarding procedures through audits, an annual review of policy and procedures and liaison with local safeguarding authorities. However, the brevity of minutes when safeguarding is discussed do not reflect the importance governors give to this area.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.8 The strong, dedicated team in the EYFS work well together for the benefit of the children. They have used the move to the new building to review the curriculum provision, particularly in mathematics, and to develop more creative approaches to learning. There are clear priorities for future development and extremely good lines of communication. Leaders and managers promote diversity by encouraging children to listen to one another and work together co-operatively. There is good attention to safeguarding. Staff meet regularly to discuss pupils and their own professional development on an informal basis but suitable arrangements for formal supervision meetings are not yet in place. Self-evaluation from leaders is most

effective and leads to the identification of areas for particular consideration in the future.

- 5.9 In the EYFS, strong and effective partnerships with parents support children's learning and development. Staff are very approachable and encourage parents to come into the setting on a regular basis. Children's home school reading record is used effectively for parents to comment on their child's learning. During interview parents showed a genuine appreciation of the safe and welcoming environment and the excellent level of communication about their children's progress and welfare.
- 5.10 Throughout the rest of the school, leadership and management are effective at all levels in ensuring that the aims of the school are fully met. The success of leadership and management is reflected in the high quality of the pupils' academic achievement, the curriculum that is offered and in most elements of their pastoral care.
- 5.11 The leadership of the senior school links well with that in the prep school, and regular formal and informal liaison meetings are held. The leadership of the school shows determination and vision which are reflected in the many new developments over recent years. The superb new pre-prep building reflects the realisation of leadership's ambitious aims. Such changes demonstrate that the leadership has fully realised a recommendation from the previous inspection to provide high-quality classrooms and improve the space for the efficient management and administration of the school. The school development plan provides a good platform for future improvement, but does not contain suitable timescales or roles and responsibilities through which success can be evaluated. School leaders are effective in self-evaluation by setting goals and reviewing their effectiveness.
- 5.12 Roles and responsibilities of leaders and managers are clearly defined and leaders are generally effective in their oversight of all school matters. However, the overview of certain pastoral matters, particularly in relation to behaviour and in the consistency of how rewards and sanctions are given, is insufficiently rigorous. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed effectively since the previous inspection and there is now more effective monitoring of marking and a consistent approach to subject development.
- 5.13 The school leadership and management is successful in recruiting and retaining high quality staff. Safer recruitment procedures for staff, governors and volunteers are thorough, and minor clerical errors found in the central register of appointments were immediately rectified. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved the procedures to consolidate policies and other strategic documents. However, links between the administrations based in both parts of the school are not always effective enough. There is a good appraisal scheme for class and subject teachers, including a peer review element, both of which provide the opportunity for staff to share good practice and to identify aspects for further improvement. A good range of courses and in-service training supports the professional development of all staff. There is a thorough induction procedure for all new members of staff. All staff are trained in safeguarding, welfare and health and safety. They value the support and welcome that they are given by the school.
- 5.14 Senior leaders in the school are inclusive in their leadership style and value the input from all members of the school community. This reflects their belief that working together encourages mutual respect and recognition that everyone has a valuable

contribution to make. A very large majority of parents feel that the school is managed and led well.

- 5.15 Links with parents, carers and guardians are strong. Parents are highly appreciative of the nurturing environment provided for their children, and the breadth of opportunities the school has to offer. In their response to the questionnaire the vast majority of parents showed strong support for the care and education provided by the school. An overwhelming majority of parents feel information about the school and its policies is readily available and almost all parents would recommend the school to other parents. A few were not satisfied with the information they received about their child's progress and with the opportunities to be involved in events at school. However, parents do receive good, regular information about their children's progress through the school's reporting arrangements and they are given sufficient opportunities to be involved in the life of the school in a variety of ways. The school actively encourages their involvement.
- 5.16 The school handles any concerns of parents with care and in accordance with its published procedures. Parents are encouraged to come into school if a problem arises. They feel that all staff are very approachable and welcome the open door policy. Communication with parents is strong. There are detailed weekly newsletters and other informative electronic communications are sent to parents on a regular basis. The website is very comprehensive and contains pertinent information about the curriculum and the school day. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school.
- 5.17 Parents of the youngest children are welcomed into class at the beginning of the day, providing opportunities for parents to talk to staff. This contributes to the trusting relationships that are built between home and school. Links between parents and the school are further strengthened through the two parent consultation evenings held each year and the detailed annual report on pupils' achievement and progress.

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