



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ORCHARD SCHOOL AND NURSERY**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Orchard School and Nursery

Full Name of School	Orchard School and Nursery
DfE Number	823/6018
EYFS Number	EY350158
Address	Orchard School and Nursery Higham Gobion Road Barton-le-Clay Bedford Bedfordshire MK45 4LT
Telephone Number	01582 882054
Email Address	admin@orchardschool.org.uk
Head/Proprietor	Mrs Anne Burton
Age Range	0 to 9
Total Number of Pupils	101
Gender of Pupils	Boys and Girls (56 boys; 55 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-1 (EYFS): 4 5-9: 49 2-5 (EYFS): 48
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	15 to 18 Mar 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 EYFS intermediate inspection was in March 2013.

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 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 Karen Williams	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Hilary Wyatt	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mrs Gillian Bilbo	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Orchard School and Nursery is a co-educational preparatory school for children aged from birth to nine years. Founded by the proprietor in 1991, the original nursery school moved premises and widened its provision to include pupils up to the age of seven years in 2001, and nine years in 2011. At the time of the inspection, 101 pupils were on roll. Of these, 52 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, 28 in Years 1 and 2, and 21 in Years 3 and 4.
- 1.2 Located in the village of Barton-le-Clay, the school occupies two sites. The original building on Sharpenhoe Road accommodates the youngest pupils, whilst those aged three and above are educated at the main site on Higham Road. Pupils are drawn from the surrounding villages and the majority progress to local independent schools. The majority are of white British origin.
- 1.3 The school aims to develop a passion for learning in its pupils, using praise and encouragement within a vibrant and stimulating environment to enable them to be the best they can be. By working in partnership with parents, the school seeks to create a community in which there is a sense of belonging and in which pupils' confidence and self-esteem are built.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average. At the time of the inspection, four pupils were identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and were all in receipt of support in school. Three pupils were identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), one of whom received support in school.
- 1.5 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
Pixies	Nursery (0 to 2 years)
Pippins	Nursery (2 to 3 years)
Russets	Nursery (3 to 4 years)
Prep R	Reception

Pre-Preparatory and Preparatory Schools

School	NC name
Prep 1	Year 1
Prep 2	Year 2
Prep 3	Year 3
Prep 4	Year 4

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in achieving its aim of developing a passion for learning and enabling all pupils to be the best they can be. Pupils attain good standards throughout the school, particularly in mathematics and English, applying their skills with confidence, and working with enthusiasm and independence in their lessons. Good teaching challenges pupils, and good pace and high expectations ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities fulfil their potential. Pupils' achievements are well recorded and used to inform teaching, although the identification of gifted and talented pupils is under-developed. The good curriculum's topic-based approach fosters older pupils' interest, although the monitoring of breadth and depth of teaching in these subjects is not yet in place. Daily planning for outdoor activities is not yet in place in the EYFS. A wide range of activities outside the classroom enables pupils to develop their skills and interests, and they succeed in sporting events with other schools.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is of a high standard throughout the school. They grow into mature, confident and caring young people, in accordance with the school's aims, supported by the excellent pastoral care. Pupils feel safe and secure, and are confident of support should they need it. Older pupils are proud of their opportunities to help younger ones, and the school fosters a family atmosphere by providing many opportunities for pupils of different ages to spend time together during the day. Pupils demonstrate a strong awareness of right and wrong, and respect for those of different faiths and cultures. They have many opportunities to take on responsibilities, and are well cared for by close-knit staff, who have an excellent awareness of their needs. The school has not carried out pre-employment checks in a timely manner, but all other arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are implemented effectively.
- 2.3 The proprietor has an intimate knowledge of the school in her other role as head. The aims of the school and the needs of its pupils are at the root of all improvements and developments. School leaders continually seek to identify strengths and areas for improvement, and the development of leaders within the school is well underway. The proprietor has sought to improve the quality of governance through the involvement of independent educational professionals. This has increased accountability and challenge, as well as support for the school and its development, although this arrangement is yet to be formalised. The school's finances are well managed, and investment in staff and accommodation has benefited the school in recent years. The drawing up of policies has been in line with requirements. Whilst those concerning academic matters have been well implemented and monitored, there has been less rigour in the recording of complaints and recruitment procedures. Since the previous inspection in the EYFS, the recording system has been streamlined to track children's progress across the setting.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to take the following action.

- Implement all safeguarding arrangements by ensuring that all necessary recruitment checks are carried out on all staff before they take up their appointment [Part 3 paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, Part 4, paragraphs 18.(2)(a) and (c)(ii), and (3), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and Part 8, paragraphs 34.(1)(a) and (b), under Quality of leadership and management in schools].
- Ensure that a written record is kept of all formal complaints, whether they proceed to a panel hearing and the action taken by the school [Part 7, paragraph 33.(j), under Complaints].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. In Years 1 to 5, ensure continuity and depth of provision in all curriculum areas.
2. Improve the means of identifying and providing opportunities for gifted and talented pupils.
3. Across the school, including the EYFS, improve rigour in the monitoring and implementation of policies, and increase formal support for the development of leadership and management.
4. In the EYFS, ensure that the use of outdoor resources is included in daily planning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims to develop a passion for learning and to enable all pupils to be the best they can be. Challenging and well-planned lessons enable pupils of all ages to attain high standards in mathematics and English, which is reflected in their written work. They develop high levels of skill, knowledge and understanding in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and apply these well in different contexts, such as well-considered accounts of Henry VIII's dilemma regarding his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Mathematical skills are advanced and applied with confidence in lessons, such as when pupils add numbers up to 1,000,000 or use their knowledge of multiplication facts to solve problems. Attainment in some other subjects is less advanced, reflecting the time allocated to these and lower expectations in lessons, although pupils demonstrate the ability to think logically, to work independently and to be creative. Pupils are well co-ordinated in dance and sports lessons. They use information and communications technology to present their work in different subjects and enjoy using the school's recently purchased tablet computers. Pupils demonstrated a thorough knowledge and understanding of their work in interviews, and were able to explain their thinking with confidence.
- 3.3 Pupils take part in a range of sporting activities with other schools, at which they have enjoyed successes. Recent participation at a swimming event against other schools brought success at school and individual levels, and pupils regularly join local rugby and football clubs, where they excel in their chosen sport. They demonstrate high levels of initiative and independence, and are keen to introduce new projects in school and to take on responsibilities.
- 3.4 Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve at a high level, as do those who are more able.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests or public examinations, but on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations.
- 3.6 The school carries out regular assessments of its pupils against national expectations and using standardised measures of achievement. These assessments, together with pupils' written work, indicate that pupils make good progress. Pupils with SEND or EAL are well supported in class, and as a result make good progress, as do those who are more able.
- 3.7 Most pupils progress from the school to local independent schools with competitive entry requirements. They achieve a high level of success in obtaining places at their first choice of school, with all pupils having done so over the last six years. Pupils experience many successes at their new schools, as reported by their new head teachers, and several go on to gain academic, music and sports scholarships at the age of 11.
- 3.8 Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. They are highly focused in their lessons and demonstrate enthusiasm and perseverance. They are able to work independently from a young age, and collaborate effectively in pairs and in groups. They enjoy using their imaginations and use equipment efficiently. When given the

opportunity to do so, they reflect on ideas and questions with maturity. Overall, their work is extremely well organised and presented.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.10 The curriculum and extra-curricular activities combine to ensure that the school meets its aims to provide a stimulating environment in which pupils can identify their strengths and fulfil their potential. The curriculum is suitable for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs.
- 3.11 Pupils with SEND or EAL are well known to their teachers and are supported effectively in class. Planning includes provision for their needs and they are fully involved in all aspects of school life. Individual support in class or in separate sessions is provided when required, and provision does not clash with other subjects.
- 3.12 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few parents felt that very able pupils do not receive appropriate support. Inspection found that able pupils have many opportunities to achieve at the highest level in mathematics and English lessons, and challenging activities feature throughout the curriculum, as do opportunities to develop enquiring minds and independent research skills. However, individual strengths are not formally identified and opportunities for those who are gifted and talented are provided on an informal basis.
- 3.13 The curriculum covers all the required areas of learning, with specialist teaching in music, French, dance, swimming, and sports lessons. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) topics are taught across the curriculum and in additional lessons. The school's practice of making useful cross-curricular links between different subject areas ensures pupils' engagement in their learning and maximises teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. However, the time allocated to some subjects is insufficient to enable pupils to attain at the levels achieved in mathematics and English, and continuity across the age range is not sufficiently monitored in these areas.
- 3.14 A wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' experiences in school. The various sports clubs and activities, such as construction, chess and origami, are very popular with the pupils. In questionnaire responses, a small minority of parents felt that the range of extra-curricular activities is not sufficiently wide. In interviews, pupils stated that they are happy with the activities on offer, and are particularly pleased that some which they have requested are now in place. Many parents also stated that they were pleased with the activities on offer. They are highly supportive of clubs, many being actively involved in their provision. Inspectors judged that the range is wide and varied, although opportunities for pupils to take part in music instrumental activities are relatively few in number.
- 3.15 A range of trips and visitors enhances pupils' learning, including outings to the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre and to a local observatory, and overnight trips for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Pupils' educational experiences are complemented by visitors to school, which have included a guide dog and his owner, and several parents, including a dentist who helped Year 3 pupils to learn how to clean their teeth. Pupils benefit from their use of the school's extensive grounds, which are used for outdoor initiatives such as gardening in the allotment and the after-school

Beavers group. However, use of the outdoors is not embedded in the curriculum and playtime facilities are not fully exploited throughout the year.

- 3.16 Pupils benefit from positive links with the community. Visits are made to a local church, synagogue and library to enhance learning, and Year 3 pupils visit nearby shops when planning their meals as part of their overnight experience in school. The pupils are involved in fund raising for charities in the local and wider community, and links are maintained with local sports clubs, which the pupils are encouraged to join.
- 3.17 In both curricular and extra-curricular contexts the school ensures that a balanced presentation of opposing views is maintained when political issues arise and that the curriculum does not undermine British values. Older pupils readily discuss political matters with their peers, with sensitive guidance from their teachers.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.19 Teaching is well planned throughout the school, making a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. It is effective in promoting good pupil progress, supporting the aims of the school for every pupil to achieve well. Teaching is particularly effective in mathematics and English, where pupils achieve at a high level. The teachers know the pupils extremely well and set them individual learning targets. These are reviewed at regular intervals and displayed in the classroom and in workbooks. Pupils are involved in setting their targets, and as a result they know them well and work hard to achieve them and move to the next level. Overwhelming support for the progress of pupils was expressed by parents in questionnaire responses.
- 3.20 Staff have good knowledge of the topics taught, which they select and plan for at the beginning of the year. In both mathematics and English, excellent teacher knowledge underpins challenging and exciting lessons that encourage independence and perseverance. Time in these lessons is well managed, and swift pace and incisive questioning enable pupils to acquire skills quickly. However, expectations in other subjects are not always as high, and a slower pace in these lessons does not engage pupils' attention or enable progress.
- 3.21 Teachers use resources imaginatively and are creative with their methods, using quizzes, real-life situations and independent practical activities to engage pupils' interest. Videos and classroom displays are actively used to support pupils and aid their learning, and teachers use incisive questioning to challenge and assess progress in lessons. The new set of tablet computers is well employed and enhances pupils' learning, and the well-stocked library has a good range of books, although it is not widely used for independent research.
- 3.22 Teaching fosters high levels of application; pupils work conscientiously and apply themselves well. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and understand that they wish them to work hard so that they can achieve their very best. Use of 'talking partners' and group work encourages collaboration, and pupils demonstrate that they can work independently without support for considerable periods of time.
- 3.23 Support for the less able and for pupils with EAL is good, tasks are well matched and appropriate support is provided. Although the most able pupils are not formally identified, their needs are met as the teachers know their pupils well and understand

when they need more challenge. Teaching promotes tolerance and respect for one another, and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues.

- 3.24 The quality of marking in pupils' English and mathematics books is strong and this enables them to learn from their mistakes and improve their work over a short space of time. Topic work is not as carefully marked, and there is an over-reliance on worksheets in some subjects, limiting opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback and for progress to be monitored effectively. Teacher expectations of the presentation of work are higher in English and mathematics, where tasks are carried out to a high standard.
- 3.25 Regular and thorough assessments of reading, writing and mathematics enable teachers to track the pupils' progress and to offer further support or challenge where necessary. Leaders analyse test data closely and identify teaching needs for individual pupils and for whole classes. For example, where a class had not grasped a mathematical concept, the teacher revisited the topic the next term. The level and amount of homework are appropriate for each age group and it is used well to support teaching and 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 Pupils' personal qualities develop extremely well, fulfilling the school's aims for them to be the best that they can be. By the time they leave, pupils are well motivated, balanced individuals who are considerate and well mannered, in accordance with the school's ethos. Pupils are mature for their age, unaffectedly confident, polite and respectful. They are proud of their school and their own achievements.
- 4.3 The school develops the pupils' confidence and self-esteem through its reward system, and pupils work hard to earn stars, house points, 'red and golden apples' and 'pen licences'. They look forward to their celebration assemblies, where certificates and house points are given out. Pupils enjoy singing together in their assemblies, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to reflect and consider non-material aspects of life for this time to contribute positively to their spiritual development. Pupils are proud of one another and they are generous with their praise. They value friendship and the time that they have spent at the school.
- 4.4 Pupils develop excellent moral awareness and actively demonstrate a sense of what is right and wrong. Even young members of the school can quote the school rules, behaviour is exemplary and an ordered, purposeful atmosphere permeates the classrooms. The vast majority of parents feel that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. In lessons, older pupils are made aware of ethical issues through reading articles in children's newspapers, and discussions in religious education (RE) and 'circle time'. They understand that laws and rules are made to protect people. Pupils accept responsibility for their behaviour readily and they prompt one another to follow the school rules, demonstrating an appropriate understanding of, and respect for, the civil and criminal law of England.
- 4.5 The social development of the pupils is particularly advanced for their age. Older pupils are mature and highly articulate; they play a key part in the life of the school and take their responsibilities very seriously, whether organising the school newspaper or looking after younger pupils in the playground. They are valued and respected by the younger pupils, who they treat like siblings. Pupils of all ages have a wide range of responsibilities, from house captains to classroom water monitors. Pupils' concern for others beyond the school community is demonstrated through the various charity fund-raising events that are often initiated by individual pupils or the school council.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural awareness is good. They learn about major world religions and festivals in their RE lessons, topic time and assemblies. For example, a pupil performed a Diwali dance in assembly and pupils learnt about Rangoli patterns in RE. Pupils are interested in learning about other faiths and cultures, and understand that people have different beliefs and values. They are tolerant of others, and respect people who are different from themselves.
- 4.7 Pupils gain an understanding of the democratic process through voting for their school council members and house captains, and the school nurtures a knowledge of public services and institutions through the PSHEE programme. By the time they leave the school pupils have learnt the basics about the parliamentary system and understand and respect core British values.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Staff have a comprehensive shared knowledge of the pupils. Weekly pastoral logs are kept, and close communication with parents is maintained. This detailed knowledge of every pupil contributes significantly to the early identification of difficulties and their swift resolution. Staff are excellent role models for the pupils, demonstrating respect towards everyone in the school community and using praise and encouragement in accordance with the school's aims. Relationships are excellent throughout the school and pupils are ready to support their peers and adults in school.
- 4.10 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy through developing healthy eating habits in their lessons, although the school's daily menus do not provide them with the opportunity to make healthy choices. Staff join the pupils for lunch, and carefully planned seating of pupils helps reluctant eaters to enjoy their meals. Pupils have many opportunities to take exercise through their lessons and clubs and in the school's spacious grounds at break times.
- 4.11 The school is highly effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Parents and pupils state that bullying does not occur in the school, and pupils are confident of support from their peers and their teachers should they experience unkindness. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with swiftly and sensitively, taking account of any related difficulty or disability, and pupils understand and appreciate the school's systems of rewards and sanctions.
- 4.12 The school is diligent in seeking and listening to the views of pupils. The school council meets regularly and pupils of all ages feel that they have opportunities to voice their opinions. Pupils are able to approach staff with ideas for new initiatives and these are carefully considered and regularly put into practice.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan in place to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.15 Care is taken to ensure that pupils are safe and well in school. Since the previous inspection, a safety audit has been conducted by external consultants and many improvements have been made to the fabric of the building. Traffic calming measures have been introduced as well as well-being checks for pupils in Year 1. In questionnaire responses, the vast majority of parents felt that their children are safe and well looked after in school.
- 4.16 Those responsible for health and safety are appropriately trained, and all staff, including those responsible for the oversight of safeguarding, are trained at the appropriate level. However, although recruitment procedures are in place, pre-appointment checks have not always been carried out with all due regard to regulatory requirements.
- 4.17 The school takes the necessary measures to reduce risks from fire, including regular fire drills, testing of equipment and checking of exits. The advice of external consultants has been sought and acted upon.
- 4.18 The school takes care to ensure that the medical needs of pupils are met, including those with SEND. A suitable room is available for pupils who are ill or in need of first-aid treatment to be looked after, and all staff have received first-aid training. Care is taken to make provision for pupils with special dietary needs.
- 4.19 The school has a detailed policy for the identification and management of risks, and risk assessments are in place for a wide range of aspects of school life. The school's attendance and admission 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 sound.
- 5.2 The proprietor is committed to maintaining the ethos of the school, the achievement of its aims and its continual improvement. Responsibilities for educational standards are discharged effectively, and finances are managed well, enabling wide-ranging investment in staff and accommodation in recent years which has had a positive impact on the education provided.
- 5.3 The proprietor has recently sought advice and challenge through the involvement in the school of professional educational advisors. This has provided support in seeking to ensure the meeting of regulatory requirements and the regular review of policies and the school development plan. Advisors visit the school regularly and conduct lesson observations, policy checks and appraisals of the school's leadership. Regular discussions provide challenge and support as well as suggestions for further sources of expertise and guidance. The development plan includes measures to continue to seek out independent advice and to formalise the arrangements in place at the time of the inspection.
- 5.4 The recent involvement of independent advisors has had a positive impact on the effectiveness of governance. However, whilst there is effective oversight of teaching and learning, the monitoring of policy implementation in other areas of the school, including the EYFS, is not always consistent.
- 5.5 The proprietor ensures that policies regarding child protection and all aspects of welfare, health and safety are reviewed regularly. However, implementation of policies concerning appointment procedures has not been consistent, and insufficient attention has been paid to the recording of parental concerns and complaints and their resolution.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is sound.
- 5.7 Leadership is diligent in ensuring that teaching policies are implemented and in monitoring the progress and attainment of pupils throughout the school. A commitment to the aims of the school, and in particular to enable all pupils to achieve their potential, is evident at all levels of leadership. School development is focused on the needs of the pupils; accommodation is continually being improved and this features prominently in the school development plan.
- 5.8 Respect for others permeates the school at every level, and is embedded in all relationships. The ethos of the school encourages a respect for democracy and there is a strong sense of community in the interactions between pupils, staff and parents.
- 5.9 Leadership provides clear educational direction in the development of teaching and pupils' personal development. Rigorous systems are in place for the monitoring of

teaching, and this contributes to the good levels of achievement attained by the pupils. The care and nurturing of the pupils are a priority; this is evident throughout the school and reflected in the pupils' high levels of personal development. The development plan identifies needs and timescales, and progress is made towards achieving its aims, particularly with regard to premises, the development of teaching and the curriculum.

- 5.10 Leaders continually reflect on the school's effectiveness, recording its successes and areas for development on a regular basis, and introducing new initiatives through the development plan. Priorities are shared with the staff and their input is sought and valued when planning school improvements.
- 5.11 The school is successful in recruiting and motivating high quality staff. Staff are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, safeguarding and health and safety, and the school encourages individual staff training. An effective appraisal process is in place, and staff training and areas for development are closely linked to school improvement.
- 5.12 The school has a clear policy in place to ensure the checking of the suitability of staff. Checks are recorded accurately on the single central record of appointments, however they have not always been carried out in a timely manner. Other measures to ensure the welfare of the pupils are in place.
- 5.13 In questionnaire responses, a few parents thought that the school is not well led and managed, and that concerns are not well handled. Inspection found that whilst leadership is well developed in educational matters, pre-employment checks have not always been carried out in accordance with regulatory requirements. Whilst many concerns are resolved on an informal basis, the school has not maintained a sufficiently accurate record of complaints and their resolution.
- 5.14 The school fulfils its aim to work in partnership with parents to create a community in which there is pride and a sense of belonging. During interviews with the inspectors and in questionnaire responses, parents expressed their overwhelming support for the school. They are particularly pleased with the progress made by their children, support the school's aims and appreciate that all teachers know every pupil.
- 5.15 There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in the work and progress of their children, such as listening to readers, running clubs, and sharing special cultural events and specialist knowledge. The school works closely with the Friends of Orchard in their support of many aspects of school life, helping to create a sense of belonging to the school community. Parents are very appreciative of the provision of before- and after-school care and the Holiday Club.
- 5.16 The informative website and high quality prospectus provide all the necessary information for the parents of current and prospective pupils. The school's 'open door' policy, daily diaries and electronic communication ensure that any queries are quickly addressed, and an online forum provides essential information and the opportunity for parents to share their children's activities. In questionnaire responses, a very small minority of parents felt that they do not receive sufficient information about the school and its policies. In interviews during the inspection, parents said that they can access required information on the school website and that they like the targeted messaging systems for information pertinent to their children. Parent information evenings, held at the beginning of the school year, provide a strong link between home and school.

- 5.17 Termly parents' meetings and annual written reports provide a detailed, personal picture of each pupil's progress and achievements, and helpful targets for improvement. Applications for future schools for Year 4 pupils are supported by informative summaries of their progress, strengths and pastoral needs. In questionnaire responses, a very small minority of parents felt that they do not receive sufficient information about their children's progress. Following a scrutiny of a representative sample of written reports, inspectors found that these reports, supported by regular parents' meetings, provided an accurate and detailed account of each pupil's progress.

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) Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 6.1 The overall effectiveness of the setting is good. Outcomes for children are good. Well-planned educational programmes and the stimulating educational environment ensure that all children, including those with SEND or EAL, make good progress relative to their ability and starting points.
- 6.2 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, ensuring that children, including those under two, become confident and enquiring learners and learn to be the best that they can be.
- 6.3 Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements for children. However, the school's recruitment policy has not been consistently implemented. Pre-employment checks have not always been carried out in accordance with the regulatory requirements. Staff meet regularly with the school's leadership to ensure that every child's needs are assessed and fully met. The EYFS team is working, with the leadership, to plan for the future development of the setting. Since the previous inspection, the recording system has been streamlined to track progress across the setting. Links with parents are good. However, the school has not maintained sufficiently accurate records of complaints and their resolutions.
- 6.4 The personal, social and emotional development of the children across the setting is good. Children feel safe and secure, and form strong bonds with their key staff within a caring and happy environment. They are well prepared for the next stage of their schooling.

6.(b) Effectiveness of leadership and management

- 6.5 The effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement. The school's leadership, who takes a strong, informed interest in the learning and development requirements of the EYFS, is responsible for management of both sites, ensuring their full inclusion in school policies and procedures.
- 6.6 The recently re-organised EYFS teaching team, with the school's leadership, is planning the future development of the setting, incorporating their high expectations for the children. A robust programme of self-evaluation and monitoring is not yet fully in place or shared with teaching assistants.
- 6.7 The well-established system of annual appraisal for teaching and support staff strongly supports targets related to individual training needs and has a positive impact on the setting. Regular, minuted supervision meetings with the school's leadership ensure that teaching staff are well supported and children's needs fully met. An effective informal system is in place for teaching assistants to discuss their key children.
- 6.8 The school fulfils its aim to work in partnership with parents to create a community in which there is pride and a sense of belonging. In questionnaire responses, parents of children in the EYFS were especially pleased with the progress their children make at school and felt that they are well looked after. A few parents felt that the

school does not handle concerns well and that they are not given sufficient information about their children's progress. Inspection found that the school informs parents well about their children's progress, although sufficiently accurate records of parental concerns and complaints have not been maintained.

- 6.9 The educational programmes ensure that all children, including the under twos, are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their skills in the prime areas of learning, and for older children to extend their knowledge and understanding to include the specific areas of learning in preparation for future schooling. Challenging experiences, based on individual learning needs, are included in planning for indoors, but are not fully incorporated into outdoor activities.
- 6.10 Equality, diversity and fundamental British values are actively promoted across the curriculum. Class rules ensure that children respect each other's values and opinions. They learn to take their turn; three year olds sign up to play in the home corner. Reception children confidently voted for their favourite book during Book Week and are involved in the annual election of school house captains. Staff model the behaviour expected of children, reinforced by praise and the promise of 'golden time' for older children.
- 6.11 All staff are trained in child protection, safeguarding, including prevention and awareness of radicalisation and extremism, and paediatric first-aid and health and safety procedures. Across the setting, the children are cared for in a safe and stimulating environment, building close relationships with their key staff. However, the school's recruitment policy has not been consistently implemented.

6.(c) Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- 6.12 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Staff have high expectations of the children, constantly challenging and encouraging those of all abilities and needs to achieve all of which they are capable, in line with school aims.
- 6.13 Staff have a secure understanding of the requirements of the EYFS, working closely together to plan programmes to cater for children's needs and interests. For example, staff adapted their afternoon programme in response to the under twos initiating a pretend game with toy crocodiles. Reception children use their enquiring minds to guide their topic work by posting questions on the 'working wall' and researching the answers.
- 6.14 Specialist teaching in music, dance, French and physical education (PE) enriches the curriculum. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities is reflected in planning for topic work, and role-play areas for older children stimulate their independent imaginative play. Outside learning areas are easily accessible from most rooms, although outdoor resources are limited, and planning does not include a natural free flow of daily activities to the outside learning areas.
- 6.15 Children's starting points for learning are accurately informed by initial assessment, including contributions from parents. Regular observations, carefully matched to developmental goals and the Early Learning Goals, build a detailed picture of each child's progress and achievements, enabling the implementation of appropriate support or challenge. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's learning, using the school's online notice board and communication tool to view class posts and suggestions for extension tasks. Since the previous inspection, the system of recording progress has been streamlined across the setting and links seamlessly to Year 1. Progress checks at the age of two are shared with parents and form part of

a child's assessment portfolio. Advice from external agencies is sought when appropriate.

- 6.16 Detailed written reports and regular consultation meetings inform parents of their children's progress and provide helpful targets for improvement. Reception children respond enthusiastically to the targets set in their individual learning stories, giving each a special time to discuss their interests with the teacher. The setting promotes equality of opportunity and recognises diversity, teaching children to respect individual differences and exploring different cultures, such as through the restaurant set up when celebrating Chinese New Year.
- 6.17 Teaching prepares children well with skills for the future. Reception children develop financial acumen in their 'garden centre' and diligently ensure that they complete the day's 'to do' task. Across the setting, children display a mature independence when choosing activities, confidently playing alone or asking to join a group of friends. Under twos considered carefully whether to investigate a tray of water and cornflour and experimented with the mixture, extending their language by offering to share with their friends. Younger children enjoy choosing their activities, for example finding the best way to build a nest for baby chicks, with twigs collected from the garden. Older children used their special telephone directory when pretending to find Spiderman's number to invite him to their picnic.
- 6.18 Children are well prepared for their transitions as staff across the setting know them very well and shared activities ensure that they are familiar with the next stage of their education.

6.(d) Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- 6.19 The personal development, behaviour and welfare of the children are good. The stimulating environment and wealth of child-centred activities, supported by focused staff, help the children to challenge themselves to achieve their potential. The under twos enjoy using their developing social skills and newly acquired mobility to explore their surroundings and create their own games. Children in Reception employed their investigative skills and developing vocabulary to discuss the contents of a set of eggs and why some are heavier, guided by focused questioning from the teacher. They enjoyed finding out about the world around them when exploring a farm in a recent visit. Three year olds followed up their interest in birds by building a hide so that they could observe different species in the garden and by making special food for them.
- 6.20 Key people know the children and their families very well. They help the under twos settle quickly into the setting, liaising with parents to ensure that home routines are followed. Across the setting the family atmosphere and the warmth of care provided by staff and the older children ensure that children are happy and valued and have someone to whom to turn.
- 6.21 Positive behaviour management and good manners modelled by staff promote a safe and secure working environment for all. Older children enjoy participating in house activities, and 'golden time' is a highlight of the week, guided by a daily chart recording individual behaviour. Children arrive promptly and their attendance is regular.
- 6.22 Children know how to keep safe, following class safety rules, such as the avoidance of running, and carefully using scissors. Reception children participated in the whole-school e-safety day, forming positive home links through a homework task to

discuss the importance of telling an adult about anything upsetting online. Younger children discuss health and safety issues in 'circle time'.

- 6.23 Personal hygiene and eating routines for the youngest children are guided by parents and fully reported on a daily basis. Older children are encouraged to be responsible for their own personal hygiene, remembering to wash their hands before lunch. Children enjoy the home-cooked lunches on offer, served for younger children in their own setting. Reception children form strong bonds by joining the rest of the school at mixed age tables. Morning snacks are chosen to provide energy, fruit is offered in the afternoon and water is always available. Energetic play at break times and specialist PE and dance teaching for older children provide opportunities for gross motor development and controlled risk taking. Physical opportunities for younger children are more limited.
- 6.24 Staff adhere to the requirement not to use mobile telephones and cameras in the setting. There is always a paediatric first aider on site and on outings, and correct staff ratios are rigorously maintained. However, pre-employment checks have not always been carried out in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- 6.25 The personal, social and emotional development of the children is excellent and they are well prepared for wider society and life in Britain.

6.(e) Outcomes for children

- 6.26 The outcomes for children are good. All children, including those with SEND or EAL, make good progress from their individual starting points because staff use their detailed knowledge of all children to ensure that they achieve their best, measured against developmental goals and the Early Learning Goals. By the end of Reception, almost all children reach, and some exceed, the expected levels of development relative to their age and ability. Levels of personal, social and emotional development are particularly high and are evident in the children's confidence and thought for others.
- 6.27 Across the setting, children enjoy their learning and use their natural curiosity to explore their surroundings. They are articulate and friendly, and love to share their experiences with an adult. Under twos enjoy using their developing language skills to communicate with their friends and proudly move around the room to choose activities. Two year olds are learning to recognise their name letters and numbers up to five. They enjoy working at the writing table and listen attentively to stories.
- 6.28 Older children demonstrate their confidence with one-to-one correspondence when singing number songs. More able children recognise some sounds and letters, and demonstrate independent writing skills, recording birds seen in the garden and writing to Father Christmas. Children count to twenty and understand the concept of one more, one less.
- 6.29 Reception children work comfortably with numbers to twenty and recognise two-dimensional shapes, using them effectively to design cards for Easter. They recognise all single sounds and some digraphs, and apply these confidently to guide their independent writing, for example producing a list for packing a holiday suitcase or labelling a diagram of a plant. They enjoy using drawing programmes on the computer and can use information remembered from a video to sequence pictures of the life cycle of a chick.

6.30 Across the setting, children are developing the key skills needed for the next stage of their education.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under two

6.31 In order to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006, those responsible for the registered provision must take the following action.

- Ensure that a written record is kept of any complaints and their outcomes.
- Ensure that all pre-inspection checks are carried out on staff before they are allowed unsupervised contact with the children being cared for.

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