



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ASHBRIDGE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Ashbridge Independent School

Full Name of School	Ashbridge Independent School
DfE Number	888/6027
EYFS Number	EY286886
Address	Ashbridge Independent School Lindle Lane Hutton Preston Lancashire PR4 4AQ
Telephone Number	01772 619900
Fax Number	01772 610894
Email Address	info@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Head	Mrs Hilary Sharples
Proprietor	Ashbridge School and Nursery Ltd
Age Range	0 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	341
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (170 boys; 171 girls;)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 162 3-5 (EYFS): 109 5-11 70
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 341
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Andrea Pratt Mrs Jane Crossthwaite
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	11 Jun 2013 to 14 Jun 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the Directors, 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 Linda Donowho

Mr Richard Raistrick

Mr Lee Sanders

Mrs Louise Harwood

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head of teaching and learning,
IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Ashbridge School is an independent day school for pupils aged from three months to eleven years, founded in 1995. It is set in an 11 acre rural landscape on the outskirts of Preston, Lancashire. The school and nursery, Ashbridge School and Nursery Ltd, grew from an established childcare company which was started in 1989 by the current directors who now administer the school. The school moved from its original location in Bamber Bridge, Preston in 2001 and has developed the provision, premises and environment over recent years. A new management structure has recently been put in place to further distribute leadership across the school.
- 1.2 The established principles of the original organisation still remain today and the school's vision of 'aspiration, attitude, achievement - potential nurtured, success realised', aims to provide a secure, supportive, purposeful environment in which children develop their sense of identity and self-esteem; whilst achieving high standards in all aspects of school life and learning. The school aims to offer continuity of care and education through a curriculum that is extensive, challenging and vibrant to children with a wide range of abilities. It also seeks to promote an acceptance, tolerance and celebration of all cultures within society and the wider world and an appreciation of the natural environment through the forest school and horticultural programme. The day care nursery for children aged three months to 4 years is open each weekday from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm for 52 weeks each year. A holiday care service also operates for pupils who attend Ashbridge and children from Years 1 to 6 from across the local community.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 341 pupils on roll, of whom 170 were boys and 171 girls. Of these, 271 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 162 were under 3 years old, and 109 were aged 3 to 4, the majority of whom attend part-time. The 15 children in Reception attend full-time. Eight pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist learning support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Two pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL) both of whom receive support.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average overall. The majority of pupils are of white British origin. Most pupils come from professional or business families, and live within easy commuting distance of the 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 National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Tiddlers	Under 2
Tadpoles	Under 2
Minnows	Under 2
Cygnets	Under 2
Goslings	Under 3
Squirrels	Under 3
Ducklings	Under 3
Hedgehogs	Under 3
Ladybirds	Under 3
Foxes	Under 3
Magpies	Nursery
Owls	Nursery
Badgers	Nursery
Reception	Reception

Junior Department

School	NC name
Class 1	Year 1
Class 2	Year 2
Class 3	Year 3
Class 4	Year 4
Class 5	Year 5
Class 6	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements, including those in the EYFS is excellent. Standards are high and progress is at least good for all pupils throughout the school. The pupils develop highly effectively in their knowledge, understanding and skills across their subjects and activities. The curriculum, with a significant focus on outdoor learning, and the excellent programme of extra-curricular activities generally supports the pupils' different abilities and ages. However, opportunities for problem solving and independent investigation, particularly for older pupils within the outdoor curriculum are not yet fully developed. Pupils' achievements are particularly good in literacy and mathematics. The pupils' success is underpinned by excellent teaching, and their exemplary attitudes to learning. On the rare occasions when teaching is less successful, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to exercise extended reasoning. The provision for pupils with SEND is fully integrated into the curriculum with excellent support in lessons being a strong feature of this provision and where necessary, through individual support.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, strongly supported by the extremely effective arrangements for pastoral care. From an outstanding start in the EYFS, pupils develop high levels of care for each other; they are polite, considerate, confident and articulate. Older pupils develop supportive relationships with younger pupils, and pupils are given a range of opportunities for responsibilities and accept these with enthusiasm and pride. The quality of welfare, health and safety is excellent. Training in safeguarding is a priority for the school, with all staff, including the two designated child protection officers, being appropriately trained. The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately, and suitably archived.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. The aims of the school are fulfilled and fostered by the directors who are highly committed to the academic progress and personal development of the pupils. They have an excellent oversight of the school, informed by reports from the leadership and through regular meetings with staff and parents. Strong leadership and management at all levels enable day-to-day school life to proceed calmly and efficiently. The leadership team provides a clear vision for the school. With the support of the full staff team, they have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and can identify areas that need improvement. The role of subject co-ordinators works well, enabling them to exercise a clear oversight of their subjects and an effective appraisal system is in place. Links with parents are also excellent. Parents are extremely positive about almost all aspects of the school's educational and pastoral provision.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Further develop the outdoor curriculum to provide more opportunities for older pupils to extend their critical thinking.
2. Use the excellent teaching within the school to promote the sharing of good practice and enable the standard of all teaching to reach that of the best.

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 is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to enable them to reach their full potential within an environment that encourages them to develop their talents, strengths and interests, whilst enriching their experiences of the world.
- 3.3 Pupils of all abilities apply their literacy and numeracy skills well across all subjects. They read fluently with excellent expression, for example in reading play scripts, or sharing their poetry with their peers. They write fluently with considerable sensitivity for a variety of purposes and audiences. All pupils take great pride in their handwriting, and the presentation of their work is of a high standard. In lessons, interviews and informal conversations, pupils' contributions were open and interesting. They are articulate when answering questions and presenting their ideas, and when given the opportunity to work in pairs or small groups, pupils discuss information in a mature way. They listen to others' ideas and adapt their original viewpoint accordingly. Pupils' mathematical skills are well developed and they use them with high levels of success across other areas of the curriculum, including science. Their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are applied successfully to a range of subjects and for some individual research.
- 3.4 Pupils' achievement is high in a broad range of contexts. Throughout the school, pupils achieve extremely well in the creative and performing arts with most achieving distinctions in external music and drama examinations. An excellent range of displays around the school are a testimony to their creativity. The skill levels of pupils in sports and games are good with boys and girls achieving equally well throughout the school. Good results are gained by teams in PE against schools locally, especially in football. Pupils with SEND achieve high standards across all areas because of the excellent support they receive. Pupils gain entry to the senior school of their choice.
- 3.5 Outside the classroom pupils' achievements in both group and individual activities are significant. The wide range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to extend their interests and, where appropriate, compete successfully in local competitions. Recently in gardening design, pupils have had significant success at the Southport Flower show. In addition they have also achieved awards from the Royal Horticultural Society, highlighting the diversity of opportunities offered to pupils.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available from lesson observations, work scrutiny and interviews with pupils it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress as they move across the school in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress as seen in their improved reading and spelling skills. This is due to the strong support they receive both in class and in individual lessons when necessary. Although more able pupil's achievement is good overall, their investigative skills are under-developed.
- 3.7 Pupils' achievements are supported by their excellent attitudes to learning, their exemplary behaviour and care for each other, and the extremely good relationships they enjoy amongst themselves and with staff. Pupils are organised, show initiative

and co-operate exceedingly well. They are well motivated, concentrate well and persevere with their work.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good overall.
- 3.9 The school fulfils its aim to offer a curriculum that is relevant, challenging, interesting and accessible to all pupils. The curriculum is unique to the school and appropriately takes in to account the specific needs of the pupils. It makes frequent use of the school's natural resources and woodlands. The curriculum is evolving and staff are fully committed to its success and development.
- 3.10 The curriculum covers the requisite areas of learning and includes a highly effective personal, social, health and cultural education (PSHCE) programme. PSHCE is taught as a separate subject and supports the emotional development of each pupil. There is a strong focus on English and mathematics across the school, and pupils benefit from the inclusion of French from Reception age. The timetable is flexible and varied with an appropriate subject emphasis in each age group. Outdoor learning is a significant element for all year groups, and adds much to the pupils' educational experience as well as enabling them to make valuable cross-curricular links. However, opportunities for problem solving and independent investigation within this curriculum, particularly for older pupils, are not fully developed. The school recognises this as an area for further development. All pupils are actively involved in gardening within the curriculum, growing and maintaining a varied range of plants and vegetables.
- 3.11 Curriculum planning is thorough within each year group and subject. Lesson plans are detailed and include separate tasks for pupils of differing abilities. Curricular support for pupils with SEND is strong, with pupils' needs being met in individual lessons where appropriate, and with support in mainstream lessons. This is guided by independent learning plans based on regular assessment of progress and pupils value the support they receive. Grouping older pupils by ability in mathematics and English ensures that their needs are met efficiently.
- 3.12 Extra-curricular provision is outstanding, considerably enriching the curriculum and is of great benefit to all the pupils. Pupils can join in such activities as tennis, football, maths, art, karate, and gardening. These activities afford the pupils opportunities to develop their social and personal skills. The extended school day for all pupils fosters the school's family atmosphere and further enhances the kaleidoscope of extra-curricular activities.
- 3.13 Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a programme of guest speakers to enrich their understanding of the world. For example, a talk from a bee-friendly plants company supported their interest in gardening. Older pupils' independence is developed through residential visits to the Lake District. Such activities provide pupils with memorable experiences that develop their self-confidence and self-knowledge.
- 3.14 The pupils' experiences are enhanced by many links with the local community. The choir sing in local nursing homes and share a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) project with a local High School. Pupils meet other young people from local schools, who are regularly invited to participate in a range of activities utilising the school's woodland and facilities. Global links are a strong part of the curriculum as the school has links with schools in Ghana, Valencia and

Lahore. Pupils gain a hands-on international learning experience through classroom based projects included exchanging cards, letters, messages. These links broaden pupils' horizons and their appreciation of the wider world.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The quality of the teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 Teaching is highly effective in supporting the school's aims and promoting pupils' progress. Teaching is typically encompassed within a framework of well-timed tasks that lead to lessons of a brisk pace, which enable pupils to make significant progress. It features varied and stimulating questions whereby teachers, who have good subject knowledge, challenge pupils' thinking. They provide plenty of opportunities for a range of independent and cooperative learning strategies. In lessons, an effective balance of consolidation, exposition and practical application ensures that pupils gain new knowledge and skills. This was highlighted in an outdoor fire lighting and safety procedures activity in which pupils collaborated with those from a visiting school, showing a strong sense of appreciation of the outdoor environment and a respect for nature and each other. On the rare occasions when teaching is less successful, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to exercise extended reasoning, and therefore progress, particularly for the most able, is reduced. Classroom resources for pupils are plentiful and of high quality. Teachers use these resources very well to support and motivate their pupils' learning. Interactive whiteboards are readily available and their good use by staff helps to produce stimulating lessons.
- 3.17 In all lessons, strong relationships between teachers and pupils are evident and are a significant factor in successful outcomes for pupils. Classroom behaviour is of a high standard and the effort and application of pupils are clearly appreciated by staff. Teachers know pupils extremely well, adapting lessons successfully to their differing needs of pupils.
- 3.18 Assessment systems are thorough, and data collected through standardised tests is used alongside the teacher's own knowledge of the pupils to ensure an appropriate level of progression for each individual. Generally, the marking of pupils' work is of a high quality. Comments are supportive, and aspects which require improvement are clearly indicated with specific targets set. These individual targets motivate the pupils and they work hard to improve.
- 3.19 The needs of pupils with SEND and EAL are extremely well met. Small class sizes allow for pupils to receive informal and formal attention from teachers or classroom assistants. Consequently, these pupils make a particularly high level of progress. More able pupils are given more challenging work in some lessons. However, on occasions, opportunities for providing them with independent investigative work and problem solving are not fully developed.
- 3.20 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents felt that homework set did not sufficiently challenge their child. Inspectors' discussions with some older pupils re-iterated this view and the pupils expressed a preference for more interesting and challenging homework.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is significant throughout the school, in accordance with its aims. Pupils understand and value of the importance of being part of a family community, so that they learn not only to appreciate their own work but also to celebrate the strength and talents of others.
- 4.3 Pupils develop an excellent spiritual awareness. A culture that encourages the appreciation of non-material aspects of life permeates the school, and there is a genuine appreciation of the beautiful surroundings. Pupils are confident, reflective and have well-developed self-esteem because caring staff give their time and support them. Through their participation in the school's strong programme of outdoor learning, this sense of self confidence, self-esteem and team work is nurtured as the pupils explore a safe and stimulating multi-sensory environment.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of moral development. Throughout the school, they are able to distinguish right from wrong and understand that rules are necessary for a harmonious community. This is evident in their excellent behaviour, and acceptance of the need for sanctions should they fall short of acceptable standards. Pupils explore moral issues with interest from the very youngest age in regular PSHCE lessons, and are able to articulate their views coherently. They also contribute willingly and generously to charitable causes, being very aware of the needs of others beyond their school.
- 4.5 Pupils' social awareness is extremely well-developed, encouraged by the strong sense of community. They reflect upon their own achievements and recognise their own strengths and those of their peers. Pupils express confidence that teachers will always support them. The warmth and courtesy they show to visitors is a strong feature of their development. They are valued as individuals and show high levels of concern for each other; older pupils are proud of the fact that they look after the younger pupils in breaks and at lunch. They have a strong understanding of institutions and services in England, and they understand, through their own elections for the school council, about how democracy works.
- 4.6 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. They develop respect for their own culture through the schools programme of music, drama and creative arts. Their involvement in concerts, learning about well-known artists, and taking part in and watching drama productions adds depth to their cultural experiences. They embrace other cultures through the school's links with Ghana, Pakistan and Spain. The staff exchange programme gives them a true insight into these cultures. Pupils' strong cultural development is enhanced by a broad programme of educational trips and visits. Through the effective religious studies programme and PSHCE, pupils gain insight into world religions and are given opportunities for discussion about them.

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

- 4.7 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 All staff share responsibility for pastoral care, which they exercise conscientiously and sympathetically. Their compassionate approach ensures that pupils are extremely well cared for, supported and guided. This fully reflects the school's aims. Members of staff work together to provide excellent role models. Staff know the pupils extremely well and time is taken to resolve any issues of concern regarding pupils that may arise. Relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive, and underpin the pupils' excellent relationships with each other. Pupils report that they feel safe and receive a lot of help from staff, and the high quality care is recognised by parents.
- 4.9 Strong friendships exist amongst pupils; the older ones are particularly helpful towards the younger ones. The school has excellent policies and systems to promote good behaviour. Various reward systems celebrate both academic and personal achievement, and boost pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils know who to turn to if they have a difficulty, and comment that they are very happy at school and have fun. They say that bullying is rare but, should it occur, they are confident that the school would deal effectively with it and pupils thrive in this atmosphere of safety, confidence and trust. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.10 The school provides freshly prepared food and encourages pupils to have a balanced, healthy diet. Pupils have abundant opportunities to take regular exercise through using the school woodlands and outside areas.
- 4.11 Pupils exercise responsibility as prefects and house and sports captains and in the school council. There are excellent formal and informal arrangements for pupils to express their views including the school council but the most effective method is the everyday dialogue between staff and pupils.

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

- 4.12 The quality of welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.13 Training in safeguarding is a priority for the school, with all staff, including the designated child protection officers, being appropriately trained. Additionally safeguarding has been a focus of very well planned in-service training for teaching and non-teaching staff. Useful relations with local welfare agencies are maintained. The school has a suitable policy on safe recruitment, and all staff have been appropriately checked.
- 4.14 Health and safety procedures are comprehensive and make an effective contribution to pupils' personal development. Risk assessments have been carefully reviewed and appropriate measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. The policy and documentation supporting external visits are thorough. Arrangements for first aid, and for sick or injured pupils, are excellent. Staff are well informed about individual pupils' needs and conditions, including any pupils with SEND, and pupils are looked after with great care. Accident reporting procedures are rigorous and records are accurately maintained. The admission and attendance registers are maintained correctly and are suitably archived.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Arrangements for the governance of the school are strong, ensuring that the school is highly successful and extremely efficient in achieving its aims. The proprietors, known as the directors, are passionately committed to the school, and provide regular support and challenge to management. They meet termly with the development forum, made up of staff and parent volunteers, to discuss all aspects of school life and its future development. This, together with regular meetings with the leadership and other senior staff, together with detailed twice-termly reports, gives them an exceptional overview of the school.
- 5.3 Prudent financial management and effective strategic planning have underpinned significant investment in high quality staff and resources, and the imaginative development of the well-maintained accommodation. Directors have received training for many aspects of their work to ensure that the school is a safe community. As directors work in the school, and attend most functions, they are familiar members of the community.
- 5.4 The directors have reviewed the child protection policy and procedures frequently, and receive regular reports on any issues giving cause for concern relating to pupils. Careful consideration is given to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils across all areas of the school.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 The leadership team has successfully created an ethos and sense of purpose that fully contribute to the excellent quality of pupils' personal development, their pastoral care, and high quality teaching and learning. Staff are supportive of the leadership team. They feel valued, and know that their opinions matter. They are dedicated to the care of the pupils and strongly support the aims of the school.
- 5.7 Management roles are clearly defined and the new structure in place works well. Deputy heads, supported by subject leaders, now form the middle management of the school. Self-evaluation and development planning are excellent, and enable staff at all levels to identify where the school is strong and where improvement is necessary. This plan is refined annually into action planning that sets out clear objectives and outcomes for each area of the school's operation. It is regularly reviewed and modified by the senior leadership team and the directors, and provides effective impetus to the school's development. The vision for the school is strongly supported by all managers and staff who have contributed to the development process, and who work extremely effectively in their teams to ensure its success.
- 5.8 The subject leaders and senior staff regularly undertake formal monitoring of teaching and learning. They have more informal opportunities to observe progress in their subject across the school. Management is successful in supporting the professional development of staff. The rigorous appraisal process enables staff to

evaluate their practice and develop their professional skills. Targets linked to training opportunities support both staff and the school's development. All teaching and non-teaching staff are encouraged to attend courses both within and outside school.

- 5.9 New staff receive thorough induction on appointment, particularly to inform them of their responsibilities in relation to pupils' well-being. A comprehensive staff handbook provides all staff with useful guidance about policies and routines. Policies are regularly reviewed, and staff receive suitable update training for their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.10 The school promotes excellent relationships with parents which are characterised by strong lines of communication, strongly supported by the efficient administrative team. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents were extremely positive about the work of the school. They were particularly satisfied with the pupils' standard of behaviour, and the opportunities for parents to be involved in events and aspects of the school's work. They felt that information about the school was readily available, and that their child felt happy and safe at the school. The school has a clear and appropriate complaints procedure, and at every level, parents are encouraged to make immediate contact if concerns arise and any concerns are dealt with sensitively in accordance with the school's published procedure.
- 5.11 All parents are provided with many opportunities to become involved in the life of the school and in their children's work. Activity days such as 'Autumn Art Adventure' and 'Dads in Nursery' are welcoming, sociable events which give parents and grandparents valuable knowledge of different aspects of the curriculum. Weekly newsletters contain detailed information about each year group's activities and achievements, and parents can keep up to date with daily events through their child's journal which is used to exchange home-school messages. Parents also have many opportunities to take part in a range of whole-school events, from sports day and concerts to the family camping weekend.
- 5.12 The school website provides both current parents and prospective parents with comprehensive information about the school. Parents value the helpful termly reports that provide clear information about their child's performance and attainment and in which individual targets are set and reviewed. The school invites parents to consult with teachers each term to discuss all aspects of their child's school experience.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Broad, balanced and creative educational programmes help children of all ages and abilities to achieve high levels of development. Activities are well-planned to reflect the children's interests so that they are motivated and excited about their learning, and develop extremely positive attitudes and dispositions towards all aspects of their time in school. In the Nursery, careful observations give staff the knowledge and understanding to build on what children already know and can achieve, although next steps are not always precisely identified. All adults carefully build the children's confidence at every stage. Older children are well supported in acquiring effective learning habits and skills. For example, staff encourage originality and critical thinking by giving the children time to reflect and consider alternative ways of doing things or describing things. All staff are most alert to any sign that a child may not be making expected progress, and extra support is given for those with SEND. All children reach at least the expected levels of development, and the most able children exceed the nationally expected levels.
- 6.2 Staff work closely with parents to ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure in the setting. Each child is allocated a key person, who acts as a point of welcome and contact, and supports the child, liaising regularly with parents. Parental involvement in the children's development and learning is actively encouraged. For example, through the 'magic moments' system and the weekly diaries, parents can contribute to their children's individual learning records by providing examples of experiences and observations from home.

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

- 6.3 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. The key person system is deeply embedded in the ethos of the setting. It promotes strong, trusting and nurturing relationships, especially for the babies and very young children who thrive in their care. All staff act as excellent role models, giving clear guidance on behaviour and placing a high priority on the safety and well-being of the children. For example, those under the age of three are provided with a tranquil area in which to sleep peacefully each day. There is a highly stimulating, well resourced and welcoming environment, both inside and outdoors. The extensive grounds, gardens and play areas are all imaginatively designed to provide rich and rewarding opportunities for outdoor learning. The regular sessions in the woodland and allotment give children the opportunity to appreciate at first hand the importance of healthy eating and exercise, and provide older children with experiences which develop cooperation, independence, imagination and a deep appreciation and enjoyment of the natural world. In the baby unit, babies explore their safe and stimulating surroundings under the constant and supporting vigilance of the staff. Children are highly competent in managing their personal needs relative to their ages. The children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning, within the setting and in transition to their next class.

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

- 6.4 Leadership and management of the EYFS are outstanding. The directors in their role as governors have direct and particularly effective involvement in the setting. All records, policies and procedures for the safe and efficient management of the setting are implemented rigorously. Staff are experienced and well qualified and they form an exceedingly strong team. They have excellent access to continuing professional development and are fully supported and monitored by EYFS managers. Self-evaluation is rigorous and has a direct and positive impact on maintaining high standards. Staff constantly seek ways to improve the provision by clearly identifying targets for further development.
- 6.5 There is a very effective partnership with parents based on mutual trust and confidence in the school, and overall parents are very reassured by the attention to detail and knowledge of their children's needs. The school works extremely closely with outside agencies to meet the needs of any individual requiring extended support.

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

- 6.6 The overall quality and standards of the provision are outstanding. Overall, the children, including those with SEND, make very good progress relative to their ability and needs. Children under three enjoy sharing stories and poems, engaging with pictures, rhymes and the rhythm of text. Children over three recognise familiar words and signs and handle books with care. Reception children apply their knowledge of letters and sounds confidently to read unfamiliar text and write simple sentences independently with an awareness of simple punctuation. Children of all ages demonstrate a secure practical application of numbers in their outdoor activities and routinely recognise shapes and patterns all around them.
- 6.7 The babies and toddlers are extremely secure and comfortable in their nappy changing, feeding and sleep routines. Older children are self-assured and self-confident; they are eager to express their own thoughts and ideas, they trust adults at school and feel secure and happy. The requirements needed for the safeguarding and welfare of children have been met. All members of the EYFS team contribute to their sharply focused short-term development planning, which results in swiftly achieved improvements to practice and performance which benefit children's continued development.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.