



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

HANDEL HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Handel House Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Handel House Preparatory School
DfE Number	925/6023
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Email Address	handelhouseschoolheadteacher@btinternet.com
Headteacher	Mrs VC Haigh
Proprietor	Mrs VC Haigh
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	79
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (43 boys; 36 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 28 5-11: 51
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Wendy Woodhead
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	24 Jun 2014 to 27 Jun 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. This is the first full inspection carried out by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Linda Donowho

Mr Andrew Rudkin

Mrs Kirsten Jackson

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Handel House Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged from four to eleven years. The school was first established in 1850 and is located in the market town of Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. The school is a limited company. There is no governing body and the proprietor is responsible for the financial and administrative business of the school. The proprietor is also the headteacher and takes responsibility for all educational aspects of the school.
- 1.2 The school aims to encourage a love of learning, encourage personal, social and academic achievement and encourage a responsibility to and for each other.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 79 pupils on roll; 43 boys and 36 girls. There were 28 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), of whom 21 were in the Nursery, including eight attending part time. Pupils are drawn from the Gainsborough area and come predominantly from business and professional families. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and a small proportion is drawn from a range of other nationalities and cultures. The school has identified three pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom receive additional support or has a statement of special educational need. There are no pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with almost half of the pupils being of well-above average ability, and few being of less than above average ability.
- 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 table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good. Standards are high and progress is good. Achievements are particularly notable in literacy and numeracy at all ages. The pupils develop effectively in their knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad range of subjects and activities, although the range of extra-curricular activities is limited. The broad academic curriculum supports the needs of those of different ages, generally fulfilling the school's aim to meet the needs of every child and encourage a love of learning. The pupils' success overall is also promoted by good teaching and their positive attitudes to learning, which contribute well to their progress. In lessons, teaching methods are generally effective in motivating and enthusing pupils and challenging them to think for themselves. However, in a small number of lessons, the pace is slow and there is a lack of clear objectives to give a focus to learning. Well-organised support for pupils with SEND, and for less able pupils, enables them to make good progress. That for more able pupils is less well structured and although most receive good support in the small classes, a small number do not.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils throughout the school is good, and is supported by the good pastoral care, together with effective welfare arrangements and health and safety procedures. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other and collaborate well when working together. A small number of parents, in response to the questionnaire, expressed concerns as to the way in which the school deals with bullying. Inspection findings showed that the school has a comprehensive process but that regular recording of this is not in place. Pupils have clear insight into their own culture but knowledge of other cultures is less well developed. Older pupils develop supportive relationships with younger pupils, and pupils are given appropriate opportunities for responsibilities and accept these with enthusiasm and pride.
- 2.3 Governance is sound, as are leadership and management. The aims of the school are fulfilled and fostered by the proprietor, who is fully committed to the academic progress and personal development of the pupils. The good achievement and personal qualities of the pupils are a direct result of the positive ethos that has been created within the school and the example which is set by the proprietor and her staff. However, the management teams lack job descriptions and clear statements of their roles and responsibilities. At present, the headteacher plays a major role in most aspects of the school's operations. There are at present no structured processes to monitor any aspects of school life or to draw upon the views of the wider school community. As a result, self-evaluation is limited and strategic planning is at an early stage of development. Arrangements for safeguarding, health and safety meet requirements. There is a good relationship with parents but, in their response to questionnaires, they expressed their need for more information as to their child's progress and inspectors concurred with their view. Parents have appropriate opportunities to be involved with the life of the school.

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. Review the management structure and define clearly the roles and responsibilities at all levels.
2. Ensure that provision and outcomes in all areas of school life are systematically and rigorously reviewed, drawing upon the whole of the school community, including meetings with all staff.
3. Develop and implement a shared plan for improvement that builds on the good practice already evident in the school, including regular whole-school meetings.
4. In the EYFS, improve provision for outdoor play.

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 The pupils are well educated in line with the school's aim to meet the needs of every child and encourage a love of learning. Pupils develop their understanding, knowledge and skills effectively in most subject areas and to some degree in their extra-curricular activities.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, all children make at least good progress relative to their starting points with many making excellent progress in some areas. The children are confident learners who are ready to take on the challenge of the next stage in their education. By the end of EYFS all children have started to read using good strategies to link spelling patterns to the sounds that they make. They confidently use this phonic knowledge to attempt to write words on their own, with some able to write full sentences. They gain a good grasp of number, working out change from ten pence when buying fruit from their 'fruit shop' and are confident in calculating one more and one less. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the world and know that tortillas come from Mexico and can show where this is on a world map. In this small setting all children are supported to make good progress including those with SEND.
- 3.4 Throughout all stages of the main school, pupils achieve well in literacy. They write with fluency and present their work to a good standard. They read with enthusiasm and skill. Their oral skills are of particular note; pupils think and reason for themselves and are able to confidently explain their point of view, whilst listening carefully and respectfully to their peers. Numeracy skills are of a high order and are applied well to investigation and mathematical challenge activities. Scientific knowledge is acquired through a wide range of activities which include appropriate opportunities for independent thought and reasoning. However, on occasion, pupils are not given the opportunity to solve problems for themselves and this can limit the progress of some of the more able pupils. Computer skills throughout the school are capable of further development. The expression of pupils' creativity is seen in the good quality of art and creative writing which is displayed around the school.
- 3.5 All pupils learn to play the recorder and to read music during their time at school and some reach a high standard. Games and physical education (PE) skills are appropriately developed in a variety of sports including weekly swimming for the whole school, but opportunities to represent their school against other teams are limited.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparable national statistics are available. Year groups in the school are small, which may affect the statistical significance of this analysis. Results in national tests at the age of 11 have been above the national average for maintained primary schools. Results have shown improvement from 2011 to 2013, and in 2013 were well above the national average for maintained primary schools. The level of attainment, together with inspection evidence from lessons, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils, shows that pupils make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND make good progress because of the individual support they receive from their

teachers in lessons. Pupils who are more able also make good progress overall because of the small size of classes.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They apply themselves well and persevere in given tasks with enjoyment; their concentration is of a high order. They involve themselves fully in the limited range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils co-operate with each other well, and show the same interest and determination when working individually. The presentation of their work is generally neat. The high-quality relationships that they share with each other and with their teachers have a very positive impact on their achievement.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The curriculum is broad, with a strong weighting in favour of English and mathematics in preparation for entry to senior schools at the age of 11. It includes all the required subjects and is further broadened with the inclusion of personal, social and health education (PSHE), French from Year 1 and German from Year 3. All pupils have lessons in drama and the curriculum includes both design technology and art. Swimming is timetabled for the whole school each week. The timetable does not always lend itself to a suitably-balanced time allocation, particularly for the younger pupils, and lessons are sometimes too long. Because most teaching is undertaken by class teachers, the opportunities for cross curricular links are strong and support the provision for humanities within the curriculum.
- 3.10 The educational programme in the EYFS makes a good provision in meeting the needs of the children who attend and gives good opportunities for children to work confidently with enjoyment. However, the opportunities for outdoor activities are limited.
- 3.11 For older pupils, the curriculum is suitable for all ages and most needs. Pupils with SEND benefit from the small class sizes and in the main are well supported by their teachers in lessons. In contrast, provision for the more able pupils is not planned as systematically, although small class sizes mean that almost all of the able pupils have their needs met. For example, the extension work given to the more able in mathematics and English is highly effective in ensuring that the pupils make good progress.
- 3.12 There is some informal liaison between staff on curriculum matters but there are no formal systems in place to review the curriculum either as a whole, or by subject, nor is there any way of ensuring formally that the curriculum meets the evolving needs of pupils as they move up through the school, and beyond. There are no curriculum co-ordinators and responsibility for the curriculum is undertaken by the headteacher. Staff generally plan their work in isolation; there is no mechanism for checking formally that the longer-term planning of work meets the needs of the pupils from year to year.
- 3.13 The curriculum is enriched by outings that supplement the work undertaken in the classroom; recent visits include ones to a local steel works, a building project and a nearby forest. The school has appropriate links with the local and wider community; they hold their Christmas celebrations in the local church and pupils visit the local home for the elderly.

3.14 The academic curriculum is supported by a limited range of extra-curricular activities. The current after-school programme, which is appreciated by pupils, includes computer games, athletics and drama. In response to questionnaires, a minority of parents felt that the school does not provide a good range of extra-curricular activities, thus limiting opportunities for pupils to develop talents alongside their academic work. Inspection evidence supports this view and in discussions, pupils expressed a wish for a wider range of activities, particularly in sport. However, an inclusive policy for school productions and participation in musical activities gives breadth to, and supports, the overall provision, which makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching.

3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.

3.16 Teaching promotes the pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school well.

3.17 In the EYFS, all children are supported by positive relationships and an enabling environment, so that they gain skills and develop a good capacity for learning. All children gain confidence in the setting and this enables them to use their skills and take academic risks by attempting to apply these skills to future learning. Staff motivate children by providing an atmosphere where children know that their attempts and their choices will be respected and valued. All children make good progress as a result.

3.18 Teachers across the school have appropriate subject knowledge and enjoy good relationships with the pupils. Much of the teaching provides a variety of learning approaches to maintain the pupils' interest, and uses time well. Teachers make the best of the limited learning resources available but the insufficient ICT facilities and the lack of a library limit opportunities for independent investigation. In spite of this, most of the teaching is successful in setting pupils a well-judged framework within which they investigate and explore. Teaching is effective in planning for, and meeting the needs of, the less able and those pupils who have been identified as having SEND. There is less consistency in the way that the needs of more able pupils are met, but the small class sizes mean that their needs are almost always met.

3.19 There is much high quality practice within the teaching, but at present, this is not being systematically identified and used to enhance the quality of learning in all classrooms. Much of the teaching captures the pupils' interest in their work and is characterised by effective open-ended questioning in lessons, to check on the progress being made. At its best, such teaching freely challenges pupils, encouraging independence of thought and resulting in learning where they think for themselves, making decisions about how to organise their work. In such an environment, pupils make rapid progress across the ability spectrum. Learning in these cases is also enhanced by the practice of stating clear learning objectives at the start of the lesson, sharing progress towards them with the pupils as the session proceeds. This is not, however, a feature of most of the teaching. The small number of less successful lessons lack this clear sense of purpose. As a result, there can be a lack of direction, challenge and a sense of urgency, so that pupils lose interest.

3.20 Assessment is sound. The small size of classes allows teachers to give pupils individual feedback and support during lessons, but marking in books often lacks

any written comment or suggestions of how pupils might improve their work. Teachers use formal assessments to check on the progress of pupils over time in their own subject, but this information is not being collected and analysed at whole-school level nor is there any systematic process by which teachers can share information about pupils' progress. For example, although the school has comprehensive data on pupils' performance in English and mathematics, gathered through verbal and non-verbal testing and from assessments linked to the national tests in the two subjects, this information is not analysed and used to set clear targets or to monitor how well pupils are doing across the curriculum.

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 good.
- 4.2 Pupils have a very positive approach to learning and behaviour. In addition, they are socially confident, being able to interact with adults in a mature manner. Within school they show kindness to others spontaneously. Such attitudes have a positive impact on pupils' learning and on the progress that they achieve. The school is meeting its aims very well in its nurturing of pupils' personal development and encouraging a responsibility to and for each other, and to be well-mannered in both school and society.
- 4.3 Children's personal development starts well in EYFS. Even the youngest children are happy to share resources, take turns and organise themselves effectively, becoming more independent. Children's behaviour is exemplary, and excellent relationships are forged between children, their carers and their parents, based on mutual respect and an ethos of nurture and care. Children are extremely well prepared for their transition from Nursery to Reception as children share afternoon activities. The transition to Year 1 is equally well supported.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual awareness is good. They are self-confident, yet also caring and sensitive to other members of the school community. They celebrate the success of others with a generosity of spirit. Pupils have a strong sense of self-esteem as a result of the recognition they receive both in class, in assemblies and around the school. They demonstrate a strong sense of reflection on non-material aspects of life when taking part in assemblies, the creative arts and in musical activities. Their appreciation of singing, prayer and music was evident in the enthusiastic singing and participation during the Year 6 assembly.
- 4.5 The moral development of pupils is good at all levels. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. A clear ethos of mutual trust exists throughout the school. The nature of behaviour of older pupils contributes significantly to the well-developed sense of community. Pupils are unfailingly kind and helpful to one another. The pupils' appreciation of moral and social matters is clear, for example by taking turns and sharing with each other, and was noted as a strength during group and class discussions with them. They make appropriate choices in their daily lives, helped by their understanding and appreciation of the varied rewards and sanctions system. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of recognising the needs of others, and willingly support the charitable fund-raising activities that regularly take place concerning people and places in the United Kingdom and abroad.
- 4.6 Pupils are well developed socially, and they enjoy being given responsibility, whether as prefects, house captains, or classroom monitors. They value these roles and wear their badges with pride. Pupils benefit greatly from the excellent relationships in the school, they have a very strong sense of community, and in interviews are clear about the importance of 'looking out' for one another.
- 4.7 The pupils' cultural awareness is good. During their time in school and during trips and visits, pupils develop a broad knowledge of democracy, public institutions and services in Britain. Older pupils visit London and its various places of interest including Tower Bridge and the Natural History Museum. Younger pupils visit local places of interest. Knowledge of cultures other than their own predominantly

Western view is less well developed, although pupils do visit a Sikh Temple and learn of other faiths as part of the curriculum. Pupils develop harmonious relationships with each other and show a mature understanding and attitude to others' differences and difficulties.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.9 Throughout the school, staff provide informal support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims to encourage personal social and academic achievement. Small class sizes led by teachers with a positive and kind manner enable pupils to receive individual attention, resulting in positive relationships, good behaviour and good social skills. Pupils are ready to treat everyone with respect, as they themselves are treated with respect by the staff. Pupils are tolerant of one another and respect each other's differences.
- 4.10 The majority of parents agreed in the parent questionnaire that the school achieves high standards of behaviour although a small minority of parents felt that the school did not deal well with bullying. The school has a comprehensive anti-bullying policy and pupils know that they can always speak to an adult if there are concerns. In discussion, younger pupils felt that they could seek the support of older pupils if they were worried. However, inspectors found that there were no formal systems in place for all staff to regularly discuss, record and monitor any such concerns. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils who have SEND.
- 4.11 The school has no formal ways in place to seek the views of pupils but pupils felt that their views are listened to by staff. The small size of the school and the good relations between staff and pupils encourages such discussion.
- 4.12 In EYFS each child has a 'key person' and staff work together to ensure that each child's needs are met. Children develop positive relationships and learn about the effect of their behaviour on others.

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

- 4.13 The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good.
- 4.14 In the EYFS, the children are happy, enjoying being in a safe and nurturing environment. The children develop an understanding of the importance of a healthy diet by being provided with fruit at break. They are keen to be physically active and know that this is good for them. They know that milk is good for their bones and that drinking plenty of water is important. They understand that fruit and vegetables are good for them and they are all fully independent in matters of their own personal hygiene.
- 4.15 The school has a well-developed and effective system to provide for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils and this has a significant effect from the earliest age on pupils' personal development. Staff receive appropriate training in child protection, both when they first arrive and at appropriate intervals; those who act as designated persons attend additional training courses with the local social services department as required. As a result, staff are aware of the action to take if issues arise and the school liaises appropriately with local agencies. Although in the past, all required documentation was not always stored in staff files at recruitment, procedures were tightened and have since been applied correctly on making an appointment. Safer recruitment procedures now meticulously follow the regulatory guidance for appointments. The centralised register of checks is maintained accurately.
- 4.16 All necessary measures are taken across the school to reduce risk from fire and other hazards; fire drills take place regularly. However, the fire evacuation record lacks sufficient detail. Thorough risk assessments are prepared for all facilities, for trips and all activities and the proprietor maintains a constant review of the site. Rigorous systems are in place for the supervision of pupils as they travel to sporting venues.
- 4.17 There are appropriate arrangements for sick or injured pupils. Staff are well informed about individual pupils' needs and conditions, including any pupils with SEND. The school has appropriate facilities for medical provision and most staff are trained in first aid, some holding paediatric first aid qualifications. The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately and suitably archived.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Governance is provided by the proprietor who is also the headteacher. She has created the ethos of the school which successfully promotes the pupils' good achievement and personal development.
- 5.3 The proprietor maintains a sound oversight which ensures appropriate investment in staff and adequate resources, but this has taken place without any clear overall strategic plan. The proprietor has recognised this and has appointed an advisory committee to support her in the planning for further oversight of the school and its development.
- 5.4 The proprietor discharges her responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety fully. She conducts the required annual review of child protection arrangements and monitors the working of its procedures more frequently than was the case in the past.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is sound.
- 5.6 The senior leadership promotes and communicates the aims of the school effectively. The good personal development and standards of achievement are a direct result of the ethos which has been created by the leadership. However, much of the management of the school is informal. There are no specific job descriptions for managers and therefore responsibilities are not clear. Too many responsibilities currently rest with a single leader, who also teaches.
- 5.7 Clear direction is given in general terms to deliver the aims of the school. Suitable educational policies are in place, but monitoring of the success of these, including that of teaching, the curriculum and planning, and of the effectiveness of systems, is informal and rests solely on the shoulders of the headteacher. Consequently, self-evaluation is of limited value as it does not draw upon the wider views of staff, pupils and parents. The new school development plan identifies appropriate goals, but has not yet been shared with staff and is not closely linked to a rigorous process that uses the information gained from performance data. A new staff appraisal system is in place but as yet, it does not include formal lesson observations, nor does it identify areas for staff development sufficiently clearly.
- 5.8 In the EYFS, although there are systems for self-evaluation, these do not feed into a formal development plan or result in the setting of clear targets for improvement. There is however a good system for the supervision, performance management discussions and continuous professional development of staff within the setting. The school has excellent links with the local authority and local welfare agencies to provide staff training; this enables staff to keep up to date on all matters relating to child protection and safety.

- 5.9 The safeguarding of pupils throughout the school, including the EYFS, is ensured through staff training in child protection, safer recruitment, welfare, health and safety, as well as risk management and clear procedures. Arrangements for recruiting staff, including the carrying out and recording of checks, follow requirements.
- 5.10 The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims to provide a secure and happy family-like environment and allow children to develop to their full potential. This relationship is based on informal contacts between parents and class teachers. A small minority of parents felt that the school did not deal well with their concerns. Inspectors judge that the school handles concerns and complaints with care in accordance with their published policy.
- 5.11 In the parental questionnaire, parents all agreed that their child is happy and feels safe at school and that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. A small minority of parents expressed concerned about the lack of provision for the more able. Inspectors found that while the small size of classes meant that the needs of such pupils are generally met, the approach to planning is an informal one, relying on individual teachers. The lack of systematic identification of needs, and of planning work in lessons to meet them, means that a small number of such pupils do not always progress as well as they should.
- 5.12 A majority of parents felt that they had few opportunities to be involved in the life and work of the school. Inspectors found that although parents are only provided with a limited amount of information about the school before joining, induction days, taster sessions and settling-in parents' evenings give parents plenty of opportunity to find out more about the school. Parents have appropriate opportunities to be actively involved in the life of the school through the Friends of Handel House, at the weekly swimming lessons and at school concerts, sports day and the Summer Fete.
- 5.13 In response to the questionnaire, a majority of parents raised concerns about the information given to them regarding their child's progress. Inspectors' findings showed that parents receive two reports a year and attend a parents evening to discuss the February report. However, although the reports are informative and give good descriptions of what every child can do in each subject, there is no indication of the next steps in learning.
- 5.14 In the EYFS there are close partnerships with parents, especially when dropping off and collecting their children. These informal meetings make sure that any concerns are quickly and sensitively dealt with so that further problems do not develop. If there are continuing concerns about the development of a child, the school is supportive in working with parents to make sure the child and parents get the help and support they need.

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