



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**EMMAUS SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Emmaus School

Full Name of School	<b>Emmaus School</b>
DfE Number	<b>865/6032</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1073476</b>
Address	<b>Emmaus School School Lane Staverton Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 6NZ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01225 782684</b>
Email Address	<b>info@emmaus-school.org.uk</b>
Headteacher	<b>Mrs Miriam Wiltshire</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Kevin C W Wiltshire</b>
Age Range	<b>4 to 16</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>69</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (35 boys; 34 girls;)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>4-5 (EYFS): 5    5-11: 28 11-16:            36</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Boys and Girls</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>15 Mar 2016 to 18 Mar 2016</b>

## 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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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.

This is the school's first inspection by ISI. It was last inspected by Bridge Schools Inspectorate in October 2010.

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 members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

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# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendation(s) for further improvement	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>12</b>
(a) The quality of governance	12
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Emmaus School is an independent co-educational Christian day school. Its overarching aim is to develop pupils' talents and abilities so that they will be able to think for themselves and become active citizens who make a positive contribution to contemporary society. The school aims to educate all pupils to a high standard, whatever their ability or background. Its belief statement and underlying principles inform all policies and practice.
- 1.2 The school is situated in the village of Staverton on the outskirts of Trowbridge, Wiltshire. It was founded in 1997 and fully registered in 2003. The school occupies the site of the old village school, where the original Victorian school buildings have been extended to provide additional accommodation. It makes use of a community playground and large playing fields nearby. Since the previous inspection, the school's outdoor area has been improved to enhance outdoor education. There have been a number of curriculum developments, including an improved range of sporting opportunities and extra-curricular activities.
- 1.3 The school operates as a charitable company, with the directors of the company providing governance. It provides education for pupils from 4 years old in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to 16 years old, using mixed-year class groups. The EYFS is exempt from the Early Learning Goals. At the time of the inspection the school had 69 pupils on the roll, 5 of whom were in the EYFS, 28 in Years 1 to 6, and 36 in Years 7 to 11. The school has 1 pupil with an education health and care (EHC) plan, who receives in-class specialist support.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average. A fairly wide spread of abilities is represented, although in the higher years of the senior school the proportion of pupils with well-above-average ability increases.
- 1.5 Pupils come from a wide range of family contexts including skilled trade, business and professional backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of White British origin, and a few are from different ethnic backgrounds. Most of the pupils live in the local area, though a few travel to the school from further away.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 The achievement and learning of pupils of all ages is good. A good balance of activities in the EYFS supports children's learning in all areas, though opportunities to develop independent writing skills are weak. A clear focus on language and mathematical development in Years 1 to 6 provides pupils of all abilities with a secure foundation for learning. The curriculum offered from Year 7 extends learning opportunities, and the choice of GCSE options offered to pupils from Year 10 is extensive. Much learning is directed by teachers and successful in enabling pupils to make good progress and attain good standards across the curriculum. The school's commitment to a biblical world view underpins teaching but does not preclude consideration of other points of view. Good systems for monitoring pupil progress ensure that teaching is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, although tracking progress in the EYFS is not recorded formally or used to inform target setting. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or EHC plans, and opportunities for extension, challenge and further study are provided for more able pupils.
- 2.2 By the time they leave the school, pupils have an excellent level of personal development. They are confident learners and demonstrate high levels of perseverance and application. Pupils of all ages are well-mannered and considerate. Excellent relationships between pupils contribute to building an inclusive and caring community, and create a strong family environment where they feel safe and secure.
- 2.3 Governance of the school is sound. Governors are committed to the school's biblical foundation; they have a clear educational vision and continually seek to improve the education offered. They are increasingly aware of their responsibilities and have undertaken appropriate training. Governors are establishing more robust systems to provide effective oversight of regulatory matters, as recent practice had failed to monitor the implementation of policies effectively. The staff appointment process has not been rigorously implemented, and consequently some of the required checks are not undertaken in a timely manner or recorded. Omissions on the central register were identified and rectified during the inspection. Delays in implementing improvements to school buildings mean that the school still had no medical room at the time of inspection for sick or injured pupils, an issue identified in the previous inspection.
- 2.4 The leadership and management of the school are sound. Staff are well supported both informally and formally through a reflective appraisal process which they value highly. The impact of development planning is weak, as no rigorous self-evaluation is in place to inform strategic planning. Day-to-day management is largely effective but informal, with an associated lack of clarity about the delegation of roles and responsibilities. Positive and affirming relationships between staff at every level, and shared values, make a strong contribution to the supportive ethos within the school.

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

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

2.5 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.

- Ensure clear delegation of roles and responsibilities so that staff appointment procedures include all regulatory pre-appointment checks [Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety; Part 4, paragraph 18(2)(a), (b) and (c), and (3) under Suitability of staff and proprietors; Part 8, paragraph 34(a), (b) and (c) under Quality of leadership and management in schools; 3.9 (b) under Suitable People in the EYFS].
- Provide suitable accommodation for the care of sick or injured pupils [Part 5, paragraph 24(1)(a) and (b) under Premises and accommodation].

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

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

1. Establish a process of whole-school self-evaluation and review to strengthen strategic planning.
2. Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by clarification and delegation of roles, responsibilities and accountability.
3. In the EYFS, provide a variety of opportunities for children to write independently using their phonic knowledge.
4. Ensure that the progress of each child in the EYFS is recorded, to support children's learning and provide information for target setting.



### **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 Children in the EYFS enjoy their learning and achieve well. Good progress is made by the children in relation to their starting points and capabilities. They concentrate extremely well and apply themselves with diligence and interest. Children solve problems when completing puzzles and work co-operatively with 3-dimensional construction materials in the outdoor area. Children use their imagination when playing together outside; for example they were observed pretending to be eagles. They speak with confidence during story time, listen carefully to one another and use their phonic knowledge to read simple words. No opportunities are provided for children to use this phonic knowledge to write independently. In mathematical activities children concentrate well and count with confidence beyond 20. They add and subtract to 10, and compare length. Children used their observation skills well when colouring in a picture of a duck to match the colours on a photograph. Their physical skills improve as they balance and climb in a nearby park. They confidently zip up their coats and persevere with shoe fastenings. Children have an excellent knowledge and understanding of Bible stories. By the end of Reception, children are either working towards or in line with the developmental levels expected for their age. A few children are working above the expected level in mathematics.
- 3.3 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aim for all pupils to reach a high standard of education, be able to think for themselves and make a positive contribution to society, based on Christian values. They develop their skills, knowledge and understanding well in many subject areas, and begin to develop organisational and leadership skills beyond the classroom through participation in extra-curricular activities.
- 3.4 Pupils from Year 1 through to Year 11 converse confidently and most can express themselves articulately. They listen well to teachers and each other. Achievement in reading and writing is strong and pupils demonstrate confident use of subject-specific vocabulary. They produce extended pieces of writing across a range of subjects and are happy to discuss and share their work with adults. When pupils are provided opportunities for logical and independent thought, their achievement is good; for example in a geography lesson pupils were able to share reasons why wealthier countries are more able to deal effectively with natural disasters. Pupils develop high standards of reasoning and numeracy skills, and are able to apply them to other areas of the curriculum. From Year 7 pupils become confident users of information and communication technology (ICT), with Year 10 pupils demonstrating high levels of proficiency when manipulating text, data and images according to set criteria. In Years 1 to 6, pupils have few opportunities to develop ICT skills. Throughout the school, pupils become increasingly confident in applying their mathematical knowledge in a range of subjects.
- 3.5 Pupils are creative; they achieve well in art, developing a wide range of creative skills. Many examples of their high-quality work are displayed around the school. Achievement in music is good. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 composed simple tunes for later performance on their recorders, and pupils across the school gain success in external music examinations. The physical development of pupils is supported through regular physical education (PE) lessons and sporting activities. Senior

pupils gain bronze and silver awards in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) scheme.

- 3.6 Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils follow a demanding curriculum that in particular includes a rigorous focus on literacy skills, which contributes to this level of attainment. The following analysis uses GCSE data for the years 2013 to 2014. These are the most recent years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Performance at GCSE has been good in relation to the national average for all maintained schools and similar to that for maintained selective schools. Including data from 2015, just over three quarters of the pupils achieved at least five or more GCSE grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, and over half of all the grades awarded were A\* or A.
- 3.7 This level of attainment as judged indicates that pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND make rapid progress and their achievement is good. Thorough records demonstrate the clear progress which they make in relation to their difficulties and starting points. More able pupils are suitably challenged, for example pupils take part and are very successful in national junior and senior mathematical challenges.
- 3.8 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they have a very positive work ethic. They are keen and motivated to achieve academically. Pupils approach tasks with diligence, and persevere when these are challenging and purposeful. They work independently, organise themselves effectively and take great pride in the presentation of their work. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses and in interview, all pupils felt that they are making good progress. Parents agree with this view and are confident that the pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils' behaviour for learning is exemplary. The good relationships forged with their teachers and with each other impacts positively on their achievements.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.10 The curriculum across the whole school successfully covers all the requisite areas of learning. It is suitable for pupils of all ages and appropriately adapted by teachers to meet the different needs of individuals. All aspects of the curriculum are underpinned by the school's faith position and fundamental commitment to a scriptural world view.
- 3.11 Children in the EYFS are provided with a variety of educational programmes which support the ethos of the school to provide teacher-directed learning. These programmes provide all children opportunities to develop new skills and reach expected levels of development. Adults know and value each child's needs and provide good support and encouragement to ensure that these are well met. Specialist teaching in art, music and PE further enriches the curriculum, and displays of the children's work in the classroom both support the curriculum and celebrate achievement. In accordance with the school's philosophy, promoting high levels of reading proficiency is a priority and this is reflected in the timetable allocations for pupils in Years 1 to 6. English and mathematics occupy a high proportion of the timetable for these pupils, securing a strong foundation for future studies at GCSE

level and beyond. Science lessons provide opportunities for developing pupils' practical skills, but their scope is weak. The creative curriculum for the pupils in Years 1 to 6 includes specialist art and music lessons which develop practical and aesthetic skills, and occasional opportunities for drama are provided through whole-school productions. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 have few opportunities to develop their technological skills, with no regular lessons in ICT. Pupils learn French from Year 3, and the majority of pupils continue the subject to GCSE level.

- 3.12 The curriculum for religious education for all year groups is firmly founded on studying Christian teachings and the Bible, in accordance with the school's stated aim. Through art, geography and history pupils have a preliminary introduction to other religious beliefs and faith traditions. The range of sports incorporated within the PE curriculum is satisfactory and includes some opportunities for pupils to participate in team games through the use of nearby community sports fields.
- 3.13 Pupils in Years 7 to 9 follow a broad and balanced curriculum which is enhanced by the introduction in Year 7 of additional subjects including cookery, Spanish and ICT, and the English curriculum lays the foundation for both English language and English literature examinations. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils follow a core curriculum of English literature, English language, mathematics, a science and a modern foreign language. Further GCSE courses are chosen from a wide range of options, made possible through the judicious use of specialist part-time teachers and online resources that support remote learning.
- 3.14 Many aspects of the PSHE curriculum are incorporated into an annual 'CARE week' which focuses on the values of compassion, accountability, respect and evaluation. The programme for this week includes a range of speakers and some visits out of school. This recent and effective initiative makes a significant contribution to promoting fundamental British values and enables pupils to learn about British institutions, services and organisations. The week includes introductory careers advice which is supplemented by opportunities for work experience for Year 11 pupils, and Year 9 pupils receive guidance when making GCSE examination choices. Health education is an integral part of the science curriculum. Through the range of topics discussed in geography and history, pupils develop a basic economic awareness and understanding. The curriculum is enriched with links to the wider community, including visits to local residential homes for the elderly and exploration of local issues such as the impact of local flooding.
- 3.15 Throughout the school the curriculum is extremely well adapted to meet the needs of each pupil. Within Years 1 to 6 the flexible teaching groups and mixed-year classes enable pupils to follow the curriculum at a level well matched to their needs and abilities. This is particularly strong in the core subjects. For pupils with SEND or EHC plans, additional teaching support is provided and curriculum resources are adapted appropriately. More able pupils study further mathematics for GCSE and are entered for the higher-level papers in science.
- 3.16 The extra-curricular opportunities offered are good for the size of school, and include the provision of opportunities to learn musical instruments. The school has a choir and a music group, with members from different year groups often playing together to lead Friday worship. Pupils can participate in the DofE scheme from the age of 14, and younger pupils can take part in an adventure challenge. The debating club and the school council provide opportunities for pupils to be involved and participate in activities that will inform their understanding of the British parliamentary process.

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

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 Teachers in the EYFS know how to promote the learning and development of each child in accordance with the ethos of the school to provide teacher-directed learning. Staff have excellent relationships with the children; they support, motivate and engage them, enabling them to learn well. Planning is comprehensive, with plans written for individual children's needs. Positive changes are made when teachers include the children's interests as part of the class topic. Adults take every child's needs and interests into account and know the progress that each is making. Progress for each child is not recorded formally and no written information is provided for target setting. Adults engage children in meaningful conversation, encouraging the children to develop their speaking and listening skills. Sufficient resources in both the indoor and outdoor environment support teaching and learning in the EYFS.
- 3.19 Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and strongly supports the aims of the school to develop pupils' talents and abilities, preparing them for their future lives while modelling the values that underpin the school ethos. Lessons are carefully structured and well planned to meet pupils' needs. Teachers' subject knowledge throughout the school is strong and lessons set clear learning objectives. Teaching is predominantly teacher led. In the most effective lessons teaching maintains a good pace and questioning is effectively matched to individual pupils' needs and abilities, enabling all to make good progress. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is often supported by the use of published workbooks. These provide clear progression guidance for learning but limit opportunities for individual initiative or creativity.
- 3.20 A sufficient variety of resources is used to support learning. In Years 7 to 11, pupils' use of tablet computers is particularly effective in supporting the development of research skills and independent enquiry. From Year 7, teaching is textbook based which provides a clear structure for learning. It also ensures that pupils have appropriate tasks and guidance when working on their own in study periods. As a result of this clear framework and pupils' own diligent attitudes, pupils make good progress in their learning. Teachers have high expectations which are shared by the pupils. Teaching promotes tolerance and respect. Political issues are covered and presented in an unbiased and non-partisan manner, as was observed in the scrutiny of pupils' work in which pupils had explored different perspectives on controversial matters such as migrant issues or animal hunting in English and geography.
- 3.21 Teaching methods promote the development of independent study skills though opportunities for intellectual interaction, but discussion between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are weak. In the most effective lessons a range of teaching styles is used, for example those that incorporate peer assessment and review. In a mixed-year scripture lesson peer assessment enabled pupils to refine and edit their work effectively, and in a Year 8 art lesson pupils were pooling ideas and making constructive comments for improvement and mutual encouragement. Where teaching is excellent, teachers' planning engages and motivates the pupils, challenges their thinking, and provides support when required and opportunity for questioning. The impact of the good teaching is observed in pupils' good levels of progress.
- 3.22 Assessment processes are effective; staff know pupils well and are aware of their individual needs, providing appropriate support to those with SEND or EAL and the

more able to enable them to make good progress. Teachers are aware of pupils with an EHC plan, and liaisons between staff, the local authority and parents are effective. Much of teachers' marking is thorough and provides helpful feedback on the steps that pupils need to take in order to make progress, but the marking policy is not implemented consistently across subjects. Written comments that are designed to help pupils improve their work are not always provided, but informal oral feedback is often offered in class.

- 3.23 Teachers know their pupils well, and relationships between staff and pupils ensure that classroom environments are friendly and purposeful. High expectations are set and targeted questioning provides appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities. In their questionnaire responses, all pupils felt that teachers help them learn and provide individual help when needed. Teaching encourages excellent behaviour, particularly in those lessons that are challenging for all pupils.

## **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 All children in the EYFS make a positive contribution as a result of the excellent support that they receive. They respect and care for each other extremely well. Whilst discussing a story children were reminded that even though we don't have everything we wish for, we do have everything we need. They are taught to show respect and speak kindly to one another. Children understand that they must all take responsibility and work together, such as when tidying up. Children learn positive values, consider what is fair or unfair and use the language of respect. They co-operate extremely well and understand that it is important to try to resolve conflicts. When children have finished their task they make their own choices about what activity they would like to choose next. The children nominate and vote for another child to receive a special annual award, thinking carefully about the qualities that they have noticed. Visits by people who work in the community provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of service in the wider community. Children's care for others is demonstrated through their participation in fundraising activities, such as supporting an orphanage in the Philippines and contributing to the local foodbank. These opportunities enrich the children's own learning and enable them to make a positive contribution to the lives of others. Children develop an understanding of their own and other cultures through stories, and through sharing in the work of other year groups such as designing rangoli patterns for Diwali. The EYFS provision actively promotes fundamental British values as is evident in the children's increasing understanding and demonstration of respect, tolerance and co-operation in their work and play. Children are extremely well prepared for their induction into the Reception class and their transition into Year 1 is seamless, as both year groups are taught in the same classroom by the same teacher.
- 4.3 From Year 1, pupils are increasingly self-aware and embrace non-material aspects of life. They are taught and appreciate the difference between right and wrong, and exhibit consistently excellent levels of behaviour. Pupils acknowledge and willingly accept responsibility for supporting one another in school and helping those less fortunate than themselves. Through community work such as sharing an Easter celebration with elderly residents in a nearby residential home and charitable fundraising for a local cause, pupils make a positive contribution to the lives of others.
- 4.4 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They value the Christian ethos which permeates the school. Assemblies and scripture lessons expand their knowledge of the Bible, and hymn practices provide an opportunity to develop and strengthen the community's faith. In lessons, pupils are able to reflect on how their faith contributes to their understanding of the world.
- 4.5 The pupils' moral development is excellent. Whether working independently, organising themselves for class or participating in practical activities, pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They have very high expectations of themselves, and enjoy and maintain harmonious relationships with others regardless of background or personal circumstances. Pupils in interview all said that they feel safe, cared for and nurtured in school, and that they always have someone to go to if they have a concern. The school has an annual award for the pupil who acts as the best role

model for others. Pupils are compassionate and caring; these attributes are developed through the opportunities that pupils have to hear visiting speakers talk about working among those who are less fortunate. The school council plans charitable fundraising activities and organises some community work. For example, pupils came into school one Saturday to pack shoeboxes with Christmas presents for children in the Philippines.

- 4.6 The pupils' social development is excellent. In their work, pupils demonstrate an appreciation of positions and opinions that differ from their own and they are able to put forward balanced arguments. The annual 'CARE week' helps prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education by examining issues such as finance, the limits of the state, respect for authority and the rights of individuals. Pupils begin to understand the principles behind the civil and criminal law of England, and the checks and balances that operate in a modern democracy such as Britain's. They have the opportunity to listen to talks about the work of dog wardens, former addicts and a puppy walker from Guide Dogs for the Blind, contributing to their understanding of the breadth of roles and responsibilities of public services.
- 4.7 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils develop an understanding of cultures other than their own through learning about the traditions and way of life in Kenya and Japan in geography lessons. They learn about African and Indian music, and learn to respect and appreciate cultural diversity through studying the art and traditions surrounding Chinese New Year and Diwali celebrations. Displays and artwork around the school demonstrate consideration of western cultural development. This is evidenced by excellent pupils' examples of William Morris ceramic tiles and a Jackson Pollock themed picture, and through their excellent drawings based on listening to Bach's Toccata and Fugue, and productions of cinquain poems. Through comprehensive inclusion of fundamental British values in the curriculum, pupils develop an increasing awareness and understanding of British life. By the time the pupils leave the school, they are extremely well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 In the EYFS each child has a key person who provides excellent support. Committed and caring staff know the children individually and ensure that all their needs are well met. As a result all children are extremely happy, feel safe and are emotionally secure. Behaviour is excellent; all children are aware of expectations and understand right from wrong, and have a secure awareness of what it means to be respectful and tolerant. They develop in confidence when they are willing to take risks to succeed. Children know routines extremely well and take responsibility, such as when handing out reading folders and clearing away efficiently after snack and lunch. In personal hygiene and self-care, children are confident and independent. They dress themselves independently for PE and for outdoor activities, and are encouraged to keep themselves healthy. Children are provided fruit and water for snack, and have a healthy packed lunch. They know that fruit, vegetables and water are good for them and understand that they must wash their hands to prevent the spread of germs.
- 4.10 Throughout the school, the staff know the pupils well and at every stage provide them with effective support and guidance. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and encouraging, as they are between pupils of all ages. Careers advice

for pupils in Years 10 and 11 supports their preparation for the next stage of their education. Pupils are encouraged to bring healthy packed lunches and all have access to drinking water. Pupils in science are taught about drugs, both the benefits of prescribed medication and the harmful effects of drug addiction and abuse.

- 4.11 Standards of behaviour are extremely high, promoted by high expectations. The school deals constructively with any incidents of unacceptable behaviour; it applies a restorative justice strategy, where a pupil reflects on his or her behaviour with a view to making more positive choices in future. A small minority of pupils indicated in their questionnaire responses that sanctions are not always applied fairly, but further discussions with pupils and scrutiny of the behaviour log indicate that formal sanctions against pupils are rare and appropriate. Pupils readily recognise that bullying or harassment of any kind, including cyberbullying, are unacceptable. Within the ICT curriculum, pupils from Year 7 are taught about online safety and responsible use of social media.
- 4.12 The school ensures that pupils with SEND or an EHC plan receive excellent support. It has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and development plans include improving access to the school's buildings. In their questionnaire responses a minority of pupils expressed that they have few opportunities for positions of responsibility and that their views are not sought or responded to. Pupils and staff in interview expressed that the school recognises the notion of collective responsibility rather than the specific authority of individuals, and pupils felt that their views are listened to when put forward and that they can make use of the suggestion boxes around the school should they wish to make a recommendation. Pupils identified the elected school council as a channel for sharing and discussing ideas; currently a prefect system is under consideration.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.14 In the EYFS children's welfare is promoted effectively and is central to everything that teachers do. Teachers have a shared understanding of how to protect children, who confidently talk to them if they are worried about anything. Risks in both the indoor and outdoor environment have been identified and recorded. Aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis in the EYFS had not been formally identified at the start of the inspection. A system for recording these checks daily is now in place. Parents inform staff of any specific dietary or medical requirements necessary for their children. These are known by staff and appropriate provision is made. Accidents and the prescribing of medicines are carefully recorded and parents are informed. Policies are relevant to the EYFS, and training in safeguarding, child protection and paediatric first aid is up to date. Adults are alert to possible risks that the children may face, and all staff have had recent training to recognise and protect children from extremist views. Children's attendance is monitored carefully in the mornings and afternoons, and parents are contacted if their children are absent; thorough procedures at the start and end of the day keep all children safe.
- 4.15 School policies to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils are informed by the regulatory requirements and reviewed annually. All staff have received appropriate training including regarding the Prevent agenda, and are fully conversant with the school's procedures. The designated lead for safeguarding and the deputy are both trained at the higher level. They understand the role of local agencies, working



effectively with them when required to do so. Arrangements to manage the appointment of new staff are not robust. A lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities has led to a delay in carrying out some pre-appointment staff checks. Omissions identified in the central register of staff appointments were addressed by the end of the inspection.

- 4.16 Effective arrangements are in place to manage the risk of fire, including regular checks on firefighting equipment, termly fire drills and staff training. Routine maintenance checks and servicing are professionally carried out and appropriately recorded. Plans for the development of the site demonstrate the school's awareness of health and safety issues, and an extensive whole-site risk assessment has recently been carried out. There is a lack of rigour in the ongoing monitoring of on-site hazards and prioritisation of response.
- 4.17 Many members of staff have up-to-date first-aid qualifications and provide immediate care for any pupil who becomes sick or injured. Such pupils have no facilities in which to be isolated or receive treatment, but the school has well-advanced plans to address this shortcoming. The school makes good provision for pupils with SEND and liaises effectively with other agencies to support any pupil with an EHC plan. The admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and stored, and supported by good systems for monitoring pupil attendance.

## **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 fully committed to upholding the core beliefs and values that underpin the school. Educational oversight is carried out by the whole board, informed by reports from the headteacher. Close contact between governors and the school community keeps the board well informed. Through the work of various committees governors effectively manage the school's finances and resources, and have ambitious plans for further developments of the school's site and facilities.
- 5.3 Governors have undertaken training to strengthen their understanding of the regulatory requirements for independent schools. They are aware of their specific responsibilities, including the need for all governors to carry out the annual review of the safeguarding policy which is now identified and recorded. Systems for monitoring regulatory matters are not robust and failed to identify weaknesses in the school's staff recruitment procedures and the omissions in the central register. A monitoring group has recently been established to address this issue more rigorously in the future.
- 5.4 All new governors indicate their commitment to the school's faith position and see serving as a governor as a vocation. On joining the school, new governors receive a comprehensive induction which includes safeguarding, health and safety and all other relevant policies. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher. The recently introduced appraisal process for the headteacher involves a local headteacher and one of the governors. This process provides effective professional support for the headteacher but has not yet been linked with whole-school development planning.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is sound.
- 5.6 Staff in the EYFS provide a welcoming environment where children are cared for extremely well. All staff respect and consistently promote the aims of the school to help children develop their relationship with God, other people and the world that God has created. The educational programmes are monitored by the EYFS staff, who discuss their ideas for the future to enable improvement, although self-evaluation is not formally recorded. Teachers are supported through an appraisal process, and formal supervision meetings which were not in place at the start of the inspection are now planned for every half term. Staff are provided opportunities for professional development and all staff attend an annual conference for Christian schools. A recent conference enabled the EYFS staff to learn more about helping to develop children's self-esteem. This is having a positive impact on the outcomes for children when resolving conflicts. Adults promote values such as equality and diversity, and sharing and turn-taking are made a clear priority. Children are inclusive of one another, understanding that every person is special and unique. All children are taught the importance of caring for each other and sharing resources. They treat each other equally and help one another, such as when putting on their aprons for craft activities. Children with additional needs receive support as a result of an effective partnership between the school, parents, local authority and outside agencies.
- 5.7 Leadership and management of the whole school enable the aims of the school to be promoted effectively. The school's Bible-based philosophy permeates all its policies and procedures, and is reinforced by the leadership. Its clear educational vision is promoted by the leadership and reflected in the high standard of the pupils' personal qualities, as well as in their academic achievements. Leadership provides good support for staff members and for the many volunteers who contribute to the school. The monitoring of policy implementation across the school is dependent on informal systems. Management of day-to-day events and activities is generally effective, although an over-reliance on informal communication weakens lines of accountability. Good systems are in place to disseminate information from staff meetings, ensuring that all staff are fully informed of current issues and concerns.
- 5.8 Priorities for school improvement are set in an annual development plan, and drawn up following consultation with the staff and discussion between the leadership and governors. This provides some educational and whole-school direction, although no clear system of school self-review is in place to inform strategic planning or the setting of long, medium and short-term priorities. Without identified targets, school improvement strategies cannot be monitored and evaluated effectively.
- 5.9 The management structure of the school is informal. Three members of staff meet weekly with the headteacher to discuss day-to-day issues and consider strategic matters. Lack of clear delegation of responsibilities and accountabilities weakens the effectiveness of aspects of management. All staff are well motivated and have been suitably trained in safeguarding and for their roles in meeting the needs of all children. They receive annual safeguarding training and are fully aware of the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education. The school successfully recruits and retains suitable staff, including a number of volunteers. The policy for the appointment of staff has regard for the required checks of suitability, but its

implementation is not rigorous. Quality of teaching is monitored through lesson observations by the leadership, and staff appraisal includes opportunities for reflection on practice and professional dialogue with the headteacher. The process, informed by the outcomes of lesson observations, is valued by staff and sometimes linked to further professional development opportunities. The headteacher provides mentoring support for new members of staff.

- 5.10 Parents are highly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. The school maintains strong links with parents, carers and guardians, and the very positive and co-operative relationship between parents and school helps to create an extremely strong sense of school community. It communicates openly with parents in accordance with its aims, contributing to the strong relationships between school and home. Excellent links are established with new parents, who feel fully involved in events and other aspects of the school. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure which is available to parents. It handles the concerns of all parents with care, and issues are dealt with swiftly and informally.
- 5.11 Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. They participate in the Advent service and enjoy attending the summer concert, sports day and other special events that celebrate the children's learning and achievements. Parents contribute actively in many ways, for example they often accompany classes on school trips, listen to children read in school and share their expertise such as in their contributions to specific topics or areas of the curriculum. Occasional meetings are run for parents, such as a recent meeting about internet safety. Parents of pupils at the school and prospective parents all receive the required information, and current parents feel completely happy about contacting the staff whenever the need arises. Staff are always available for informal discussions with parents during the week, ensuring timely and effective communication between home and school. Parents receive clear and informative reports at the end of the autumn and summer terms which provide excellent information about each child's progress and achievement. These written reports are supplemented with annual parents' evenings which provide current parents with valuable information.
- 5.12 Social events organised by parents such as coffee mornings and prayer meetings bring parents together and strengthen the school community, and the recently formed parents' association supports the school in many ways. Parents of current pupils receive regular information about the school. Annual calendars are provided for all parents and a weekly bulletin on the school website celebrates achievements and educational visits. At the beginning of the school year, information evenings are held for children starting in Year 7. A helpful prospectus and website provide prospective parents with important information while they are considering whether to join the school. Parents are also able to attend open days and so gain a greater understanding of the school, its values and its community.
- 5.13 In their questionnaire responses the overwhelming majority of parents, including those with children in the EYFS, were very positive about the school in all of its aspects. They were especially pleased with the progress their children make, and felt that an appropriate range of subjects was offered and that the school handles concerns well. In discussion, parents were also extremely positive. Parents of the EYFS children particularly value the fact that the school's community is like that of a family and that their children feel secure, loved and supported.

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