



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

KINGSMEAD SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Kingsmead School

Full Name of School	Kingsmead School
DfE Number	344/6014
EYFS Number	EY317034
Registered Charity Number	525920
Address	Kingsmead School Bertram Drive Hoylake Wirral Merseyside CH47 0LL
Telephone Number	0151 6323156
Fax Number	0151 6320302
Email Address	enquiries@kingsmeadschool.com
Headmaster	Mr Mark Gibbons
Chair of Governors	Mr Timothy Turvey
Age Range	2 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	180
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (116 boys; 64 girls)
Numbers by Age	2-5 (EYFS): 29 5-11: 46 11-16: 105
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Gwyneth Mallery
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	12 February 2013 to 15 February 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in December 2010.

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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Jean Marsland

Mrs Angela Clancy

Mr William Trelawny-Vernon

Miss Mary Regan

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

Page

1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

(a) Main findings

(b) Action points

- (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements
- (ii) Recommendations for further improvement

3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- (a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning
- (b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)
- (c) The contribution of teaching

4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils
- (b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care
- (c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- (a) The quality of governance
- (b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

- (a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend
- (b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being
- (c) The leadership and management of the early years provision
- (d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Kingsmead School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged two to sixteen. The school was founded in 1904 by Arthur Watts, the son of a Baptist minister, as a Christian school for boys. Girls first joined the school in 1975. Situated on the tip of the Wirral peninsula, the school occupies a twenty-acre site, comprising playing fields and woodland, with teaching accommodation being a mixture of Victorian red-brick houses and modern, purpose-built facilities. The school ceased to offer boarding in September 2012. The school is a limited company and a registered charity. A board of governors oversees the work of the school.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide, within the framework of a safe, secure and happy Christian environment, a balanced academic education which will enable each individual to develop his or her abilities to the full and to develop a sense of personal values. The school aims to: offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities; make education a challenging and positive experience in which each child can feel some measure of success and acquire confidence and self-esteem; and to prepare its pupils to work in a changing society and meet successfully the challenges of the 21st century.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, 180 pupils were on roll. Of those, 42 were in the infant department for children aged two to seven, including 29 in the EYFS, for children aged two to five; 17 of those were attending part-time. Thirty-three pupils were in the junior department for children aged seven to eleven and 105 pupils were in the senior department for pupils aged eleven to sixteen. Around a third of the total number of pupils are girls. Most live within a ten-mile radius of the school. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds; most are White British, with the rest coming from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.
- 1.4 Evidence from standardised tests indicates that the ability profile of the junior school is broadly in line with the national average, with pupils demonstrating a fairly wide spread of abilities. In the senior school, evidence from standardised tests indicates that the ability profile is slightly above the national average, with around a half of pupils having ability that is at least above average. The school has identified 62 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 32 receive specialist learning support. Three pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom one receives support with English. Twelve pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school for pupils from Reception to Year 11. For children in the EYFS, other than those in Reception, 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	Nursery (Ages 2 to 3)
Nursery	Nursery (Ages 3 to 4)

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in fulfilling its aims. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the pupils' achievement is good, both in their academic work and in their activities. All pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and the more able, make good progress in relation to their abilities. They are well supported by the good quality teaching they receive, which shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of marking has improved since the previous inspection although some inconsistencies remain across and within subjects. The pupils' good achievement is also well supported by the good curricular provision and by the excellent range of extra-curricular activities provided after school. However, the range of activities at breaks and lunchtimes is currently limited, as is the library provision. The pupils' achievements in all parts of the school are further supported by their highly positive attitudes to their work, the good level of skills they develop and by their, almost always, exemplary behaviour.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, the pupils' personal development is excellent. The pupils' spiritual development is outstanding. Their social development is excellent and they have a well-developed awareness of cultural matters. At all stages, pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They show a high degree of care for one another and for all members of the school community and make a willing contribution to the school and to the wider community. The pupils are well supported by the good arrangements in place for pastoral care. The school takes a strong stance against bullying. However, on occasion, the recording of any incidents is not always sufficiently detailed to confirm that the anti-bullying policy is fully implemented. Arrangements to promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good and all appropriate policies are now in place. This shows a significant improvement from the previous inspection.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is good, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Governors are highly committed and dedicated to supporting the ethos of the school. They take seriously their role in monitoring the work of the school, including their responsibility for checking that the school meets all the statutory requirements. They are almost always effective in monitoring policies and their implementation. The quality of leadership and management throughout the school, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good and shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection, strong leadership at the highest level has been very successful in raising standards and in ensuring the school has made significant progress in many areas. Senior leaders and managers have ensured that all the action points and recommendations of the previous inspection report have been met. The senior leadership and management throughout the school are fully committed to supporting pupils in their work and progress and in their personal development. They take seriously their responsibilities for drawing up and implementing policies. However, on occasion, not all policy implementation has been sufficiently detailed. Links with parents are positive and contribute to the overall high quality of the school community. The school takes parents' concerns seriously although, on occasion, records of complaints have not always been sufficiently detailed.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:

- ensure that the anti-bullying policy is fully and consistently implemented, including keeping sufficiently detailed records [Part 3, paragraph 10, under Welfare, health and safety];
- ensure that written records are kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing [Part 7, paragraph (j), under The manner in which complaints are to be handled].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

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

1. Improve the library environment so that it more effectively supports the pupils' learning.
2. Increase the number of activities available to pupils at breaks and lunchtimes.
3. Improve the quality of marking so that it is consistent across and within subjects.
4. In the EYFS, improve the organisation and layout of the areas for older children so they can successfully choose their own learning activities.
5. In the EYFS, use the programmable devices and other technology provided more effectively to improve the children's skills in this area.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is good.

Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, pupils achieve good levels of understanding and skill in a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities, in line with the school's aims. All pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and those who are more able, achieve well across all areas of learning. The pupils are highly articulate and they listen and read well. They have good numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, which they apply successfully across the curriculum and in their activities. As they progress through the school, pupils develop increasingly good skills in thinking independently, logically and critically and they express their ideas in a mature manner relative to their age. They show high levels of creativity in their work in art, music and drama and their physical skills are well developed.

3.2 Pupils achieve well in a wide range of activities including in sport, music and drama, and in public speaking. Over the last three years, thirty-three pupils have achieved success in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme at bronze level and one at silver level. Individual pupils have achieved at a high level in a wide range of activities. For example, in a wide range of sports at regional and national level, taking the lead role in a play performed by a local drama group and in poetry writing competitions. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 11, almost all go on to sixth-form studies, including to selective sixth forms, both independent and maintained.

3.3 For pupils in Years 1 to 6, attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available from the pupils' work in books and in class, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make appropriate progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. This is confirmed by standardised measures of progress. The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been similar to the national average for maintained schools overall. In 2009 and 2010, results were above the national average for maintained schools; in 2011 results were similar to the national average. Results in 2012 showed an improvement. The level of attainment indicates that pupils make progress overall that is appropriate in relation to pupils of similar abilities. Throughout the school all pupils with SEND, EAL and those who are more able, make good progress. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents and most of the pupils said they are pleased with the amount of progress made. This was confirmed in lesson observations, in the scrutiny of the pupils' work and in discussions with pupils.

3.4 In all parts of the school, pupils show highly positive attitudes to their work and activities. They are focused on their learning and they speak about it with enthusiasm. Their behaviour is almost always exemplary. They organise their work well and settle to work quickly. They work well independently and in groups, co-operating very well with each other and with staff.

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

- 3.5 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.6 At all ages the curriculum successfully meets the pupils' needs and supports the aims of the school. Broad and balanced, it effectively covers all the requisite areas of learning. The pre-inspection questionnaire showed that the overwhelming majority of parents appreciate the range of subjects and areas of experience offered to their children. The inspection confirms this good provision. The curriculum has been carefully thought out so that it gives strong evolutionary support as pupils progress through the school. French is introduced in Year 1, separate sciences are taught from Year 7 and a good range of GCSE options is offered. An appropriate range of sports within the curriculum is supplemented by a wide variety of extra-curricular sporting activities. Enrichment and enterprise days provide further opportunities for pupils to widen their experience and to develop their skills. In line with the recommendations of the previous inspection, provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for careers has improved significantly. That for PSHE is now excellent, and careers guidance is good. The library environment is adequate but does not support the pupils' learning effectively, in that it is not conducive in encouraging pupils to develop their research skills or to read for pleasure.
- 3.7 Strong provision is made for more able pupils; for example, through offering additional subjects such as Latin and a wide-ranging programme of lectures. Excellent provision is made for those with SEND and EAL. Pupils benefit from the recently opened learning and development unit which provides them with a welcoming and highly-supportive environment.
- 3.8 The curriculum is greatly enhanced by the excellent range of worthwhile after-school activities which broadens the pupils' experiences and strongly contributes to their personal development. The high quality of this provision is appreciated by the vast majority of the pupils and almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and was confirmed by the inspection. The range of activities at breaks and lunchtimes, however, is limited, so that pupils do not gain maximum benefit from those times. Pupils of all ages are offered a broad range of trips, both local and further afield, including residential trips. For example, pupils in the senior department visit the World War 1 battlefields where they trace the experiences of former Kingsmeadians.
- 3.9 The school has developed a good number of worthwhile links with the wider community. For example, pupils perform to and provide music for local senior citizens and are involved in a local arts festival. The school has established a link with a school in Botswana and annually hosts a visit from a Danish sports school, playing matches against them.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 The contribution of teaching throughout the school is good.
- 3.11 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the contribution of teaching is effective in promoting the pupils' progress and in supporting the aims of the school. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- 3.12 In all sections of the school, the most successful teaching is excellent and highly effective in promoting the pupils' progress and stimulating their interest in and

enjoyment of their learning. Most teaching is characterised by careful planning, clear learning objectives, good subject knowledge and effective management of time. For example, excellent planning enabled some of the youngest pupils to use similes highly effectively to give interesting detail to their poetry writing. Throughout the school, resources, including ICT, are used imaginatively. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and maintain the pupils' focus; a good variety of activities engages the pupils' interest and encourages them to think independently and to question intelligently. In the pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority said that they are encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently, which was confirmed by the inspection. In the small amount of less successful teaching, there is a less varied approach, with a tendency for lessons to be overly led by the teacher and, in some subjects, for work set to be over-reliant on worksheets, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, the pupils' interest is less engaged and their individual needs are not fully met.

- 3.13 Throughout the school, most teaching gives careful regard to the pupils' individual needs and their progress and understanding are regularly assessed. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection report, considerable emphasis is now given to developing the pupils' independent learning skills and to matching tasks to different abilities. For example, examination coursework is often carefully planned to provide different tasks for individual pupils. Teaching throughout the school is almost always successful in providing sufficient challenge, including for the more able pupils. Teaching is highly successful in supporting those pupils with SEND and EAL and in meeting the provision set out for those pupils with statements of special needs.
- 3.14 A very large majority of the pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said their teachers help them to learn. This was confirmed to be generally true in discussions with pupils, lessons and in the scrutiny of the pupils' written work. Pupils, particularly the younger ones, benefit from high levels of individual attention in lessons. Pupils spoke appreciatively of the willingness of their teachers to give extra time outside of lessons to help them with their learning. Pupil progress is effectively tracked over time and the assessments are used in planning of future work. The quality of marking is good overall and has improved in line with the recommendation of the previous inspection. The best marking gives helpful comments that constructively guide pupils as to how they can improve their work. However, in some instances, the quality of marking is not consistently good across and within subjects so that not all pupils benefit equally.

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 The pupils' spiritual development is outstanding and fully supports the school's aims. Pupils gain much from the school's Christian ethos. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, almost all pupils show high levels of self-confidence; they are almost always self-aware and emotionally mature for their age. They show positive levels of self-esteem; they recognise their own worth and are aware of the equal worth of others. Pupils at all stages show a high degree of spirituality and prayerfulness. They have a high regard for the non-material aspects of life. They readily take the opportunities offered in their lessons and activities to reflect on these, as demonstrated by the highly thoughtful nature of the assemblies they plan and lead and by the popularity of the extra-curricular activity 'iGod'.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is strong in all sections of the school. They demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong and they understand the need for communities to have rules. As a result, their behaviour is almost always exemplary. They have a strongly developed sense of moral and ethical values. For example, in religious education older pupils discussed the pros and cons of having wealth and in PSHE older pupils thoughtfully considered how their money can be invested to help in those in need.
- 4.4 Throughout the school, the pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils are very well mannered and considerate of the needs of others. They show outstanding awareness with regard to their social responsibility and helping those less fortunate than themselves. Fundraising is a frequent occurrence and charities both at home and abroad are supported by the pupils who are generous in giving of their time and money. For example, pupils organise the annual summer fair to raise money to sponsor children in developing countries. Pupils of all ages are willing to take on positions of responsibility and contribute to the running of the school, and have good opportunities to do so. As they progress through the school, the pupils develop an excellent awareness of political and economic matters. Older pupils are able to discuss local and national issues with knowledge and understanding. An example of this was demonstrated in a PSHE lesson where pupils showed good understanding of their local Members of Parliament and the workings of the House of Commons.
- 4.5 In all parts of the school, the pupils' cultural awareness is well developed. They appreciate the achievements of their own and a wide variety of other cultures, as shown for example, through their work in art, including art from other cultures, from their study of literature from a range of cultures, and, in particular, through the pupils' excellent performances in singing and in drama. Pupils show a high level of respect for other faiths and cultures and have harmonious relationships with those from families different from their own. They enjoy celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year and learning from pupils from different countries talking about their own traditions and cultures. By the time they leave school, pupils have a high standard of personal development and are well placed to meet the demands of future life and to make a valuable contribution to society as a whole, as envisaged in the school's aims.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.7 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the arrangements for pastoral care are successful in supporting the aims of the school. Staff know the pupils very well and give them highly effective individual support and guidance. In addition, a counsellor provides a weekly drop-in listening service. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said their children are well looked after, which is confirmed by the inspection findings. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and characterised by high levels of mutual respect and warmth. Pupils are confident they know who to turn to with any worries or concerns. Pupils almost always treat each other with respect and care, and willingly help each other both in lessons and around the school.
- 4.8 Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle and partake in regular physical exercise. The meals provided by the school are nutritious, tasty and plentiful and support pupils in making healthy choices. The pupils have plenty of opportunities to take exercise both in the sports offered within the curriculum and in the after-school activities.
- 4.9 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour. Staff expect high standards of behaviour and deal constructively with any incidence of unacceptable behaviour, taking due account of any related difficulty or disability. An effective rewards and sanctions system reinforces good behaviour. A minority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said sanctions are not always given fairly; inspection evidence indicates this not so. The school takes a clear stance that bullying will not be tolerated and has a suitable anti-bullying policy. Of those responding to the pre-inspection questionnaires, a few parents and a small minority of pupils said they feel bullying is not handled well. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is alert to any reports of bullying. However, the implementation of the anti-bullying policy lacks consistency as recording of any such incidents is not sufficiently detailed to confirm that the anti-bullying policy is always fully implemented.
- 4.10 The school uses effective methods to seek the views of pupils. Results from the pre-inspection questionnaire showed a minority of pupils feel that the school does not take their views into account. However, discussions with both staff and pupils showed that pupils' views are sought and taken into account. For example, the pupils' suggestions raised via the school council have been acted upon. Junior pupils now have backpacks, and new blinds and a water fountain have been installed in the senior school. A recent survey on pastoral care provided a further opportunity for pupils to express their views.
- 4.11 The school now has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.13 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the pupils' welfare is promoted effectively, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. All the welfare, health and safety recommendations of the previous inspection report have been met.

- 4.14 The school is conscientious in ensuring that all staff are trained in safeguarding at the appropriate levels for their roles and at the required intervals, including clearly designated officers for child protection, and the school now has a fully detailed safeguarding policy. The required pre-appointment checks on staff are carried out correctly and recorded appropriately. Suitable health and safety policies are carefully implemented. The school has effective arrangements to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. All points raised in the school's fire risk assessment have been addressed. All members of staff receive fire awareness training. Regular fire drills are held and carefully recorded; any follow-up actions identified are efficiently implemented. A few minor health and safety matters which were identified during the inspection were speedily attended to.
- 4.15 Appropriate provision is made for pupils who are ill, injured or who have SEND. The needs of pupils with medical or other needs are made known to staff as appropriate. Suitable first aid policies are now in place. A good number of staff are trained in first aid. First aid boxes located around the site are well maintained. The induction programme for new staff includes helpful training in safeguarding and health and safety arrangements. The admission register and the attendance registers are carefully maintained and kept for the required period. In response to the previous inspection report, attendance registers are correctly taken at the start of the morning session and absence recorded accurately.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governors are highly dedicated to school. They are fully supportive of the school's ethos and highly committed to supporting it in achieving its aims. The quality of governance shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the governors effectively discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning, accommodation, resources and investment in staff.
- 5.3 The governors have an excellent insight into the work of all the departments within the school. They are frequent visitors to the school; they visit lessons, attend events, welcome parents new to the school and meet with staff to discuss aspects of their work. They work closely with senior staff in drawing up the school development plan (SDP). They are kept well informed by the senior leadership, via formal reporting and via frequent more informal contact to discuss day-to-day matters. The governors are highly successful in providing support, challenge and stimulus for further improvement and have been effective in ensuring that all the recommendations of the previous inspection have been met.
- 5.4 The governors bring to their role a good range of expertise and experience and they are conscientious in undertaking training relevant to their roles. They take seriously their responsibilities for checking the school meets all statutory requirements, including that all required pre-appointment checks on staff are carefully carried out. They almost always ensure the effective monitoring of policies and their implementation; they have now undertaken the required annual review of the arrangements for safeguarding and child protection.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.6 Since the previous inspection, strong leadership at the highest level has been very successful in raising standards throughout the school and in ensuring that the school has made significant progress in many areas. These include the quality of the provision in the EYFS, the quality of teaching, the quality of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety, the quality of governance and the quality of leadership and management. Senior leaders and managers have ensured that all the action points and recommendations of the previous inspection report have been met and have enabled the school to now fulfil its aims to a significant extent.
- 5.7 At all levels of responsibility, the quality of leadership is good and management is effective. All members of the leadership and management team are highly committed to the school's aims and, in particular, to continuing the school's caring and inclusive Christian ethos. They give clear educational direction, as shown by the good level of the pupils' achievement and by the excellent standard of their personal development. They are successful in evaluating the work of the school, in recognising and developing its strengths, in setting priorities for further development, and in ensuring these are achieved. A detailed SDP, drawn up with input from the

wider staff, clearly identifies priorities and the actions needed to achieve them. The leadership and management team is effective in ensuring that all the required staff pre-appointment checks are carried out and recorded. Senior managers give due attention to the regular revision and implementation of policies. In almost all cases they are effective in ensuring all policies contain sufficient detail and in ensuring that all policies are fully implemented.

- 5.8 All sections of the school, including the support staff, are well managed and staff work well together to monitor the work of the school and to promote its further development. In line with the recommendation of the previous inspection report, those charged with the leadership and management of teaching and learning have successfully improved the precision of the measures used to track the pupils' progress and have improved the rigour of checks on the quality of teaching and assessment so that the quality of teaching and learning is now mostly good.
- 5.9 Management at all levels is successful in ensuring sufficient high-quality staff are appointed and in ensuring that they are well supported in their roles. Induction training for new staff is good. All staff receive regular update training in safeguarding and in welfare, health and safety matters. A comprehensive system for staff appraisal, including self-review, allows staff to reflect on their work and to identify areas of their work and role for further development. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of parents indicated that they did not feel that the school is well led and managed, a view that is not supported by the inspection evidence.
- 5.10 The school has established constructive relationships with parents, carers and guardians in all sections of the school, including in the EYFS, in accordance with its aims. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said they are happy with the education and care provided for their children. Inspection evidence confirms this view. A few parents said that information about the school and its policies is not readily available to them. However, the inspection confirmed that all of the required information is easily accessed either via the school's website or on request from the school. In addition, parents are kept well informed via regular newsletters and via the website, which contains much useful information about the life and work of the school as well as news of forthcoming events and reports on the school's many activities.
- 5.11 Parents are provided with numerous opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children, including invitations to concerts, plays, sporting events and the school's annual speech day and prize giving. In addition, the parents' association is involved in organising social and fundraising events for the school, for example the fireworks display and the spring ball, events which are enjoyed by members of the whole school community.
- 5.12 Detailed and informative school reports, grade cards and parents' consultation evenings ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's work and progress. In addition, the parents are encouraged to contact the school at any time should they have any questions or concerns. A very small minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school has not always handled their concerns well. The inspection found that the school takes parents' concerns seriously. A suitable complaints procedure is in place and is implemented largely successfully although, on occasions, records of the handling of complaints are not always sufficiently detailed.

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 good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Broad and balanced educational programmes give children many opportunities to develop appropriate skills, and to express their ideas confidently and with enjoyment, in line with the aims of the setting. Well-planned teacher-led activities successfully promote the children's learning. Some good examples were seen of younger children being able to choose their own activities and follow an area of personal interest. However, the organisation and layout of some curriculum areas does not allow older children sufficient scope to choose their own learning activities. Provision is made in the setting for children to have experience of programmable devices and computers; however, currently this provision is not used effectively. All children, including those with SEND, reach expected levels of development. The most recent end of stage assessments show that the most able children exceed national expectations. Children are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 6.2 Teaching demonstrates high expectations of children in terms of their behaviour and learning and is generally successful in motivating them and engaging them in well-planned activities. Teachers 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, supports the child and liaises regularly with parents. Parental involvement in the children's development and learning is actively encouraged. For example, parents can contribute to their children's individual learning records, provide examples of experiences and observations from home, and contribute comments to their children's reading diaries. Parents are kept well informed about children's achievements and progress, receiving two informative written reports each year as well as having many opportunities to speak with teachers at parents' evenings and at the start and end of the school day.

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

- 6.3 Provision for the children's well-being is good. All children, including the youngest and those in need of additional support, experience positive relationships with adults and other children, forming secure emotional attachments. Those children under three receive excellent care and support; they are very happy, respond positively to other children and adults and thrive in the setting. Children aged three and over also enjoy excellent relationships with adults and are very well cared for. They are developing independence, can play co-operatively, and enjoy what they are doing.
- 6.4 A high priority is placed on the children's happiness. Due attention is paid to their health and safety. A few minor health and safety matters brought to staff's attention were speedily addressed. High standards of behaviour are expected of children and they understand the importance of considering others' feelings, and the need for co-operation, respect and sharing. Children eat nutritious snacks daily, drink water frequently throughout the day and enjoy healthy lunches. Children, teachers and parents are all currently involved in a joint health and education partnership with the

local health service trust. This has enhanced awareness and understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and physical activity.

- 6.5 The provision for the children's physical development is very good. Children in Kindergarten use the recently developed outside area which offers exciting opportunities for learning through play using an extensive range of equipment. Older children have a weekly swimming session, enjoy music and movement lessons and participate fully in all physical education activities. Those under three can use cutlery and are beginning to eat independently. They are beginning to manage their own personal hygiene with adult support. Older children can manage their own hygiene and personal needs. At each stage of transition within the setting, including Reception moving up to Year 1, arrangements are good and children are very well prepared.

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

- 6.6 Leadership and management are good. The governor with designated responsibility for the EYFS is very supportive and visits the setting termly. Leadership and management ensure that the setting is welcoming, safe and secure and that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Staff have received appropriate child protection training and fully understand health and safety procedures. Those staff trained in paediatric first aid ensure the children's medical needs are met. Teachers have good opportunities for in-service training. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated. A detailed development plan successfully highlights points for action and identifies success criteria. An effective and comprehensive system of staff appraisal encourages continuous professional development. Exceptionally strong links have been established with the local authority and advisory staff work closely with teachers. A positive and effective relationship has been established with parents. All of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed strong support for all aspects of the work of the setting, which was confirmed by the inspection.
- 6.7 All the recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented effectively. More robust systems are now in place for the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of work in the EYFS and are being trialled. A consistent approach to planning, observation and assessment has been introduced and is effectively used. Staff have developed knowledge and understanding of the EYFS framework through in-service training. An outdoor learning area has been developed to enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum.

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

- 6.8 The overall quality and standards are good. Children, including those with special needs, make good progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. The most recent data shows that, by the end of Reception, the most able children reach standards beyond the national age-related expectations. Those under three demonstrate an interest in playing with others and are beginning to form special friendships. They show an interest in sounds, songs and rhymes and enjoy singing familiar nursery rhymes. Older children in Nursery display good listening skills and can follow a simple story without pictures, recalling relevant detail. They can identify initial sounds in familiar words and use their phonetic knowledge to sound simple words. They can recognise and order numerals to ten, with the most able being confident with numbers above ten.

- 6.9 Reception children are confident and highly articulate. They read reading-scheme books confidently and are beginning to write simple sentences independently with an awareness of capital letters and full stops. They have a developing maths vocabulary, and can add and subtract single digit numbers as well as identifying and naming two-dimensional shapes. The children's skills in using programmable devices and computers are not fully developed, however. Children are self-assured and self-confident; they are highly articulate, trust adults at school and feel secure and happy. The requirements needed for the safeguarding and welfare of children have been met. The leaders and managers within the setting demonstrate a commitment to evaluating practice and effectively manage continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.10 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.