



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**LALEHAM LEA SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	<b>Laleham Lea School</b>
DfE Number	<b>306/6008</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1118598</b>
Address	<b>Laleham Lea School 29 Peaks Hill Purley Surrey CR8 3JJ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8660 3351</b>
Email Address	<b>secretary@lalehamlea.co.uk</b>
Headmistress	<b>Mrs Johanna Staunton</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Elaine Hallam</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>81</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (40 boys; 41 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 0      5-11: 39 3-5 (EYFS): 42      11-18: 0</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed (17 boys; 25 girls)</b>
Inspection dates	<b>24 Jan 2012 to 27 Jan 2012</b>

## 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 November 2007.

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 through the following link: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and disability).
- (ii) The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning corporal punishment.

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<sup>st</sup> 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 Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) 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.

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. The grades used by ISI and Ofsted are different to 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 for Achievement the descriptor 'exceptional' is available in addition.** 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 a governors' representative, 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**

Mr Tony Hubbard

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Deborah Buckenham

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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

- 1.1 Laleham Lea is a Catholic independent school for boys and girls aged between three and eleven. The school has existed as an independent diocesan school since 1963, operating as a charitable trust. It became co-educational in 1994 when the Nursery, now called Little Fishes, was introduced. In April 2009, it became a fully financially independent charitable company, limited by guarantee, but still subject to the diocese. The present headmistress came into post at the same time.
- 1.2 The school, though Catholic, welcomes pupils of all faiths. It is situated in a residential area in Purley, Surrey. The school aims to create an environment which is caring and loving, and in which pupils may grow intellectually, socially and emotionally. It aims to find the unique gift in each child and enable all to achieve their potential.
- 1.3 The school has a total of 81 pupils on its roll: of these, 42 are in the EYFS setting, of whom 17 are boys and 25 are girls, and 39 are aged from 5 to 11, of whom 23 are boys and 16 are girls. The pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds and include a diverse spectrum of ethnic and cultural heritages.
- 1.4 The school does not have entrance examinations. On the evidence of observation and of the individual reading tests carried out on entry to the main school, pupils' ability ranges from well below to well above average. Seven pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom one has a statement of special educational needs. Three pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.5 At present, pairs of classes are taught together for some of their curriculum time. When so combined they are known as Transition (Years 1 and 2), Lower Junior (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Junior (Years 5 and 6).
- 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 Pupils are well educated throughout the school and the educational development of children in the EYFS setting is excellent. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their learning and work hard. The individual support received by each pupil provides them with confidence that they are making good progress. Pupils of all ages are thoroughly grounded in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), and are well prepared for the next stages of their education. The breadth of pupils' experiences both within and beyond the formal timetable is good throughout the school and excellent in the EYFS setting. Teaching and assessment are good and some is excellent, especially in the EYFS. The key strength throughout the school is the excellent knowledge teachers have of every pupil evident in the way work is matched to their needs and potential. The comprehensive curricular co-ordination in the EYFS results in consistently high progress; progress in Years 1-6 lacks this consistency because curricular planning for knowledge and skills varies between subjects.
- 2.2 The quality of personal development throughout the school is very high. Pupils of all ages are confident, articulate and reflective learners. They are extremely well behaved with a clear sense of right and wrong, and are considerate towards others. They take readily to responsibility. Pupils of all ages and cultural and ethnic backgrounds relate to one another with understanding and respect. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. Pupils are extremely well known to all staff who communicate with each other constantly about any needs or problems. The school provides good care for the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils. All the requirements for safeguarding are in place.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The identification and review of priorities is a genuinely collegiate process which involves all staff and in large measure overcomes a variability in the detail of some recording in Years 1 to 6. Recruitment and retention of staff are very good and comply with required procedures. The EYFS setting is very well led and managed, even though the timetable does not always allow Reception staff to attend review meetings. Management of the upper part of the school is effective overall but stretched by the lack of administrative and caretaking support and of sufficient scope for delegation. The level of engagement with parents throughout the school is very strong and many parents are involved in the life of the school. Approval for the school from parents, as evidenced in the pre-inspection questionnaires, is particularly high.

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

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

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

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

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

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Improve the consistency of standards and teaching in Years 1 to 6 by strengthening the co-ordination and monitoring of subject planning and teaching.
2. Clarify the senior management roles, including the roles of headmistress and bursar and provide adequate administrative support.
3. Improve the cohesiveness of the EYFS by engaging Reception more strongly with the Nursery.
4. Improve the detail and accessibility of pastoral and welfare records in Years 1 to 6 to match the exemplary quality in the EYFS 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' overall achievement is good.
- 3.2 The school meets its aim to enable pupils to fulfil their potential. The strongest feature of the achievement is the fact that pupils of a wide range of ability are able to do well; this is the result of the close and professional attention they receive and the smart manner in which the curriculum they receive is organised. Pupils throughout the school are securely grounded in the key skills of literacy and numeracy and their levels of skill and understanding in the use of ICT are high. The quality of pupils' imaginative writing shows improvement as a result of a focus on wider reading. Pupils of all ages are highly articulate and can write lively prose and poetry in a variety of contexts. Mathematical development is also strong, from Nursery, where children can recognise their basic shapes and count up to 20 and beyond or Reception, where they can add and subtract one, to Years 5 and 6, where all can apply secure number skills and the more able can carry out simple investigations. The levels of knowledge, understanding and skill are good across the majority of subjects. However, in some subjects the pupils' grasp of key skills and concepts is less developed, because they are not sufficiently emphasised in planning. For so small a school, pupils have a good measure of success in competitive team sports against other schools and in championships.
- 3.3 Almost all children in the Reception class have attained well beyond the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) by the time they move on to Year 1. The numbers of pupils entered in National Curriculum tests in Year 6 in recent years are too small for reliable comparison, but their results have been consistently above or well above the national average for maintained primary schools. On this evidence, together with that from the pupils' work, their attainment is judged to be good. On the evidence of the school's data about the prior attainment and needs of its pupils, this represents a good and in some cases excellent achievement. The majority of pupils obtain entry to their first choice of independent or maintained selective schools.
- 3.4 Children in the EYFS setting make at least good and mostly excellent progress. For example, in Reception children show a rapidly developing ability to use phonics in their reading. In the EYFS classes, children's knowledge and understanding of the world develops rapidly. All those with EAL have rapidly acquired fluency and their progress is indistinguishable from that of their peers. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good and sometimes excellent progress in lessons. In a science lesson for a mixed age class, pupils of two year groups, taught together and divided into groups by ability, all experimented eagerly, responding to increasingly open-ended challenges about the solubility of different substances. All, from the least to the most able, had something valuable to offer, in a way that was typical of the lessons observed.
- 3.5 Pupils throughout the school are eager, inquisitive and diligent, because of the high expectations and encouragement they receive from their teachers. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. They set to work quickly and efficiently, whether they are working as individuals or as pairs or larger groups. Children in the EYFS setting understand the importance of sharing and of including others in their play, a habit that is evident through the rest of the school. At all ages and abilities pupils think for themselves and debate ideas with each other and their teachers. Their critical thinking and listening skills are well developed through the quality of the teachers' questioning. As they move up the school, they learn to take notes and

to set out their investigations in diagrammatic and other formats. They are very independent minded and curious and relish debate, at which they are adept. Those with SEND show great confidence because of the support they receive from their teachers, while more able pupils respond well to the more searching and open-ended questions and problems they are given.

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

- 3.6 The overall quality of the curriculum is good.
- 3.7 The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is good and for the EYFS is excellent. The most important strength of the educational provision throughout the school is its inclusiveness, so that the school's ambitious aim to find the unique gift in every child, no matter what the subject or whether it is academic, practical or social and emotional, is fulfilled. The intelligence with which the school has used its small size to place individual pupils in classes and groups in which their ability and needs can best be met is remarkable and something on which some pupils commented. Unstinting support is organised for any pupils that lack confidence or have SEND, mostly within the class, but with some more intensive support outside the class.
- 3.8 In the EYFS setting, all the Early Learning Goals are planned for and taught in an integrated way, which judiciously balances planned direct teaching with opportunities for pupils to learn through their autonomous but discretely guided choices. Early literacy and numeracy are introduced and developed according to the readiness of each child. Years 1 to 6 follow all the national curriculum subjects, together with religious education (RE), personal, social and health education (PSHE) and dance, in a way that covers all the required areas of learning for a reasonable time. In this respect, and in the increase of provision for design and technology, the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- 3.9 The curriculum provides a good transition from Nursery to the steady emergence of separate subject study and homework. Pupils and parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed that the amount and types of work pupils take home is about right. There is a good range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities. Sport and music are particularly strong and pupils relish the opportunities provided by their coaches and take the training they receive very seriously. The Irish dancing is extremely popular and allows pupils of all ages to share their time with children from another school and to achieve high standards for their various physical capacities. The quality of provision for 'early birds' provides a friendly, almost family start to the day, while the after-school provision for 'late leavers' is extremely well resourced, offering planned activities for pupils of different ages as well as a snack.
- 3.10 Planning in the EYFS is excellent overall. Staff constantly work together to review the effectiveness of their provision and adapt and improve it, although because of timings, staff in Reception cannot always attend meetings at the end of the day, detaching it slightly from Nursery. The planning of subjects from Year 1 to 6 is good in most subject areas, despite the lack of specific subject co-ordination, as a result of the small number of staff. The school is aware that a few subjects are not as effectively developed as they are in the majority. The school has an effective process for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND, including any with a statement, so that they make particularly good progress. Provision for the pupils with EAL has been very effective, so that these pupils, all in the youngest classes, rapidly acquire fluency in English. Gifted and talented pupils benefit from the

planned individual attention given to each child in both EYFS and Years 1 to 6 ensuring that their needs are met well.

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

- 3.11 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.12 The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good and some of it is excellent. That in the EYFS is mostly excellent. Since the previous inspection, both the EYFS and the main schools have maintained the quality of teaching. The key strength of the teaching, highlighted by both parents and pupils in their questionnaires, is the success with which teachers match their teaching to the ability and needs of each pupil and build their pupils' confidence and aspirations. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and close communication between teachers enables this knowledge to be shared and sustained across subjects. As a result pupils of all ages and capacities are able to make progress in line with their ability, including any with SEND or EAL.
- 3.13 Individual lessons are well planned and very effectively organised and managed. In the EYFS, teachers create a bright welcoming environment, skilfully and imaginatively resourced to stimulate children to make excellent progress in all six areas of learning. They strike an ideal balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning and make constant use of the well-equipped outdoor spaces in all weathers. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 are regarded as kind but firm by their pupils. They manage the mixed age classes with great skill, tailoring the work to each pupil, and taking the opportunity to move pupils up a year or down a year for particular subjects and times of the week. Time-keeping and pace are good, an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers are good at drawing out pupils and at stimulating discussion and debate at all ages, something which pupils relish and which helps them to acquire their evident articulacy. Teachers are lively and enthusiastic and make good, often creative use of the resources available, including ICT, often imaginatively creating their own materials. Particularly good use is made of individual laminated boards to support literacy and numeracy. Subject knowledge is strong.
- 3.14 Teachers at all levels are good at promoting independence in their pupils successfully. This was evident, for example, in the way in which in the midst of going home time in the Nursery, pupils asking for help in putting on their coats were reminded how they had been taught to do this the previous day and with a little help and a lot of coaxing were enabled to do this independently. This fostering of independence is a strong feature throughout the school. In many lessons in Years 1 to 6 teaching encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to think things out for themselves.
- 3.15 The arrangements for tracking the children's development and needs in all their areas of learning in the EYFS are fully in place and highly effective. Teachers use this information accurately to determine each child's next steps. The quality of assessment in the rest of the school is sound and is appropriately a priority for the school's improvement plan. Pupils' work is marked fully and this often includes supportive comments or suggestions for improvement, and pupils confirm that where nothing is written, helpful oral comment is given. The use of the optional national tests is beginning to give the school a valuable guide to the progress of individuals and the use of standardised descriptors to make assessment more systematic across more of the subjects has begun successfully. The depth and detail of

assessment is less evident, however, in the subjects outside English, mathematics and science.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils throughout the school display extremely good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's aims and mission fully underpin the development of each child. Almost every policy and practice is steeped in the values the school aims to develop in its pupils, including adaptability, enthusiasm, honesty, responsibility for others, awareness of the world around them and knowledge of the Catholic faith and understanding and respect for other faiths. In this the school has retained the strengths reported in 2007 and further built on them.
- 4.3 From Nursery to Year 6, pupils respond to the loving ethos of the school by growing in confidence and self esteem without vanity. From assemblies, the weekly Catholic masses and from many of their lessons they acquire the ability to reflect sensitively on the intangible and spiritual aspects they experience. In interviews, for example, pupils were thoughtful and reflective and showed an understanding of their feelings and sensitivity to the feelings of others.
- 4.4 Not only are the pupils very well behaved, but they showed patience in the few instances where a pupil was troubled and took time to settle. They are extremely polite and considerate. They understand and respect the rules of the school. Their work in RE has made a deep impression on them because of the debates they hold on controversial aspects of the law, justice and fairness; these enable them to understand that what is fair is not always easy to see. Through their PSHE they have learned to deal with problems that arise in the school day, such as an argument in the playground, and this contributes to the high quality of relationships. They understand the difference between good and bad choices from discussions, for example, in circle time in the Nursery.
- 4.5 The pupils love the school so that many talked of it as being like a family, in accord with one of the school's aims. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to take responsibilities; children in Reception add up the numbers present on the register before taking it to the school office and older pupils assist with Mass and serve as house or team captains. Older pupils take a pride in mentoring younger pupils. Pupils understand that that they are part of a larger society and that they should contribute to as well as gain from it. As a result, they take a pride in raising money for good causes such as cancer charities.
- 4.6 The school is diverse in terms of ethnic, cultural and religious heritage, and pupils from different faiths and heritages relate well together on a basis of mutual respect. In addition to their Catholic education, pupils show awareness and understanding of other faiths and culture, such as the Jewish faith and practices, which they were studying with interest, and the Chinese culture, which pupils had studied in the previous term; they participated in celebrations of the Chinese New Year with relish. Pupils also benefit from many opportunities for cultural experience, and many study musical instruments and take an energetic part in the Irish dancing club.

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

- 4.7 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Teachers throughout the school take extremely good care of their pupils. Both parents and pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire strongly endorsed this view. The school fully succeeds in creating a caring and loving environment. Communication and co-operation between staff and parents in promoting the needs of their children are very strong. Pupils express trust in staff and feel that there are several to whom they could go when they are upset or have a problem. Children in the EYFS setting show complete trust in their key workers.
- 4.9 The emphasis in the school's approach to discipline is upon praise and the encouragement of positive behaviour. Staff establish an atmosphere in which pupils show extremely good behaviour and in almost every way respect the school's rules as fair. Relationships among pupils and staff are in every other way excellent. Bullying is not tolerated in the school. Policy and practice are clear about this and pupils and their parents endorsed this strongly in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Proper records are kept of any related incident to ensure that it has been dealt with and followed up.
- 4.10 Pastoral documentation is at its strongest in the Nursery and Reception, where records are extensive and track each child's development and any concerns or needs in great detail. From Year 1 to 6 teachers keep less detailed, though satisfactory, records and rely more on their own excellent knowledge and on oral communication with their colleagues.
- 4.11 The school caters extremely well for the widely differing physical, social and emotional needs of its pupils, not least because it fully honours its mission to seek the unique gift in every child. The school's access plan is fully up to date, is comprehensive, and effectively carried out to make sure that as far as practicable no pupil is disadvantaged by either the accommodation or the school's provision.
- 4.12 Although the school does not formally consult its pupils, staff make themselves aware of the views of their pupils by talking to them and so take their views into account.

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

- 4.13 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.14 The school takes its responsibilities for the safeguarding of pupils very seriously and has in place excellent policies, training and teaching practices. Recording and filing are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, while in the EYFS setting they are exemplary in their detail and use. Both parents and pupils expressed confidence in the care the school provides. The school has close links with the child protection agencies, including in the EYFS, and staff are all trained up to date and familiar with the requirements of the policies. Designated safeguarding staff have up to date training.
- 4.15 Arrangements for health and safety, including the related training are mainly rigorous and always at least sound. The arrangements for protection against fire are thorough and effective. Careful checks are made of buildings and grounds and the necessary logs maintained. Arrangements for first aid are fully meet. Staff take meticulous care to ensure that parents give the necessary permissions for

medication and are informed that the dose has been administered. In Years 1 to 6, in cases where permission had been secured by telephone, the fact that parents had been notified of administration of doses was not automatically logged, an issue rapidly dealt with as soon as pointed out. Meticulous care is taken to minimise risk on visits out of school. Class risk assessments in the upper part of the school, while adequate, are less detailed than those in the EYFS.

- 4.16 The school keeps a proper admissions register and accurate registers of daily attendance.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good overall.
- 5.2 The governance of the school has important strengths, which outweigh some important areas for improvement. The governing body is inevitably small and includes the headmistress and bursar. This enables it to have a close insight into the workings and performance of the school, including the EYFS setting, for which one of the governors has a direct responsibility. The governing body's composition guarantees the strength of the school's Catholic ethos. It supports the school very well, but has been less effective in providing constructive challenge. It has not resolved a lack of clarity about the relative degree of strategic authority that lies with the head and bursar, respectively. Governors support the financing of the school's resources successfully. It takes very seriously its role in safeguarding pupils and includes a named safeguarding governor and has other governors with relevant experience. Governors review the safeguarding and other policies and their implementation at more than annual intervals. The governing body takes a close interest in the school and its staff and parents and some governors visit classes and attend school functions.

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

- 5.3 The quality of leadership and management is good overall.
- 5.4 Leadership at all levels is a great strength of the school and has gone a significant way to counteract some administrative weakness in the otherwise good management of the school. Leadership and management are extremely successful in sustaining the school's distinctive ethos and in realising its demanding aims, particularly that which seeks to find and develop the unique gift in every child. Recognition of the human quality of the school, and of its strong communication and good pastoral support and academic standards are recognised through the exceptionally positive response of parents to the pre-inspection questionnaire, in which scarcely any negative view was found.
- 5.5 The school currently has a limited management structure, because it has given priority to generous adult to pupil ratios throughout the school, which contributes importantly to its academic and pastoral strengths. The headmistress and the bursar have specified areas of responsibility, which they carry out effectively, despite the lack of clarity about their respective strategic authority. The EYFS setting, which is at present roughly half the school in number, has a head of Nursery, with the headmistress as overall head of the setting; this structure leaves an unevenness in the link between Nursery and Reception, which, though of good quality, is somewhat detached from the rest of the EYFS. The absence of delegated subject co-ordination in Years 1 to 6 contributes to the relative weakness in curriculum planning and pupil progress in some subject areas, which prevents good provision from becoming excellent. In the absence of a school secretary or caretaker, staff in Years 1 to 6 and, in particular senior management, are severely stretched in ways that prevent the generally good record keeping from attaining the exemplary detail and quality evident in the EYFS setting. Yet the academic quality and standards are



good and the quality of the pupils' personal development and pastoral care are excellent. This is in large part because of the genuinely collegiate leadership, in which clear and committed vision and consideration are answered by understanding and by dedicated professionalism and loyalty throughout the staff. Thus the present circumstances have been made to work remarkably well, even though both senior management and the governors recognise that the success of current administrative arrangements is vulnerable in the absence of appropriate support.

- 5.6 The EYFS self-evaluation demonstrates a thorough and detailed understanding of the strengths and priorities for development, with all the staff fully engaged in this process, supported by weekly team meetings to review progress. In Years 1 to 6 also teachers are closely involved in the discussion and identification of strengths and areas for action or improvement. There is a clear and accurate common understanding of the main areas for development, even though its written documentation is less detailed than that for EYFS. Much planning and review concentrates on the needs of individual pupils and is very effective in this. There is a clear and simple set of priorities for the school's future development, supported by appropriate financial planning. The school keeps the financial arrangements for the main school and EYFS scrupulously separated.
- 5.7 Management takes very seriously its responsibilities for the safeguarding, welfare, health and safety of all its pupils, and ensures that all the necessary policies and related training are in place and implemented. It is especially strong in its attention to the equal treatment of individuals and groups within the school. Policies are clear and thorough and are fully implemented. All the necessary records are kept and record keeping in EYFS is exemplary.
- 5.8 Leadership and management have been very effective in recruiting, motivating and developing high quality staff. Proper care is taken to recruit staff, governors and volunteers safely, and the school has a good procedure for this, which includes the requirement of a member or staff with training in safer recruitment on all appointment panels. There is a useful emerging system of performance management, especially effective in the use in Years 1 to 6, where staff scrutinise work together. This has enabled the school to identify creative writing as an area for development for the current academic year and to track progress in improving it.
- 5.9 The school has exceptionally strong relationships with its parents, engaging them extensively in the work of the school. Parents in their comments in the pre-inspection questionnaire and in informal discussions with inspectors were full of praise for the school and its leadership in all aspects of its provision. The school meets its aim to have a family atmosphere and parents are very closely engaged in the work and life of the school in every aspect, and this is nowhere more evident than in the EYFS setting. Parents of pupils and prospective pupils receive ample information about the curriculum and all aspects of the care and life of the school. The reports, sent out twice a year, are of good quality, and give a clear picture of what has been studied, the progress made and areas in which pupils might improve. The arrangements for raising concerns and complaints are simple and clear. No complaint has required a panel hearing, and those handled at a more preliminary level are carefully considered in close discussion with the parents and properly resolved. A parents' association is highly active in supporting the aims of the school by bringing parents together socially and being informally consulted about the school's priorities. There is also a parent consultant on the governing body.

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