



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ANNEMOUNT SCHOOL

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Annemount School

Full Name of School	Annemount School
DfE Number	302/6051
Address	Annemount School 18 Holne Chase Hampstead Garden Suburb London N2 0QN
Telephone Number	020 84552132
Email Address	headteacher@annemount.co.uk
Principle	Mrs Geraldine Maidment
Proprietor	Mrs Geraldine Maidment
Age Range	3 to 7
Total Number of Pupils	101
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (49 boys; 52 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 65 5-11: 36
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 101
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr Aiden Griffin
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	06 May 2014 to 09 May 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous Ofsted inspection was in March 2009.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Sue Bennett	Reporting Inspector
Mr Derek Llewellyn	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, COBIS school)
Mr Gary Wright	Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)
Mrs Penny Oates	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Annemount Nursery and Pre-Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys and girls from two years nine months to seven years old. The school was established in 1936 and is located in Hampstead Garden Suburb in north-west London. The proprietor has sole responsibility for the financial and administrative operations of the school which has no governing body. The proprietor is also the head teacher and takes responsibility for all educational aspects of the school.
- 1.2 The school aims to: bring out the individuality of each child so that they can realise their potential with self-discipline and respect. The philosophy of the school aims to encourage good character and citizenship so that each individual can be a valued member of the community. Since the previous inspection, the school has created a music room for specialist tuition and two additional smaller classrooms for precision teaching and small-group work.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 101 pupils on roll. Of these, 65 children were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); 5 boys and 7 girls attend on a part-time basis and 26 boys and 27 girls attend full-time. There are 36 pupils in Years 1 and 2. The school has identified 14 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and extra support is provided for their learning. Additionally, 26 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), 14 of whom require extra support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average and some pupils have well above average ability. Very few pupils are below average ability. The majority of pupils come from business or professional families who live locally. Most pupils are of British ethnicity and others are from a broad mix of other nationalities and cultures.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery (rising 3)
Kindergarten	Nursery (ages 3 to 4)
Reception	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievements, including for those children in the EYFS is excellent. The school is highly successful in meeting its aims. Throughout the school, staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' individual needs. From the EYFS onwards, pupils with SEND and/or EAL receive excellent support for their learning. Teaching challenges more able pupils extremely well. All pupils, including the youngest in EYFS make excellent progress in their learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers an excellent range of extra-curricular experiences. Resources are plentiful and age appropriate. Classrooms each have their own library corners, although the breadth of library resources to support pupils' independent research learning, including for the EYFS is more limited. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) is not consistently implemented across the whole curriculum. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, a result of the highly effective teaching approaches.
- 2.2 Pupils have excellent standards of personal development by the time they leave the school. All staff, including those in the EYFS, have a consistently strong approach to nurturing the well-being of each pupil and creating an environment which is warm, welcoming and safe. This is a significant strength of the school. The personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHC) programme permeates school life. This enables pupils, including the very youngest in the EYFS, to develop a strong understanding about their moral and social responsibilities. Pupils are courteous and respect the needs of their friends. Their behaviour is exemplary. Older pupils enjoy responsibility roles, whilst children in the EYFS show great willingness to be helpful and make their individual contributions towards the school's overwhelmingly strong family atmosphere. Pupils have a clear understanding of their own and other cultures. They are proud of their charitable work to help the less fortunate and have a strong understanding about their responsibility towards caring for the world.
- 2.3 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. The proprietor, who is also the head teacher, maintains oversight of all aspects of the school and provides strong direction for monitoring both its successes and future developments. Leadership and management demonstrate an extremely strong commitment towards achieving the best possible standards and outcomes for the pupils, including those in the EYFS. While the safety and welfare of pupils has a strong focus within the school, recruitment processes for new staff have not always followed regulatory guidance. Identified discrepancies noted during the inspection were fully rectified by the close of the inspection. Policies and procedures updated during the inspection now reflect recent regulatory changes. Links with parents are excellent. During discussions, parents express their overwhelming satisfaction with all aspects of the school's education and pastoral provision. Inspectors concur with these views.

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:
- implement all recruitment checks on staff before they begin work [Part 4, paragraphs 19.2(a) and 22.3(b), under Suitability of staff and proprietors and Part 3, paragraph 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Develop the use of ICT across the curriculum and the breadth of library resources to support pupils' independent research learning, including for the EYFS.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are very well educated and achieve high standards in their learning across their subjects and activities. Pupils, including those with SEND or EAL have excellent attitudes to learning; they become independent in their approaches to new challenges and increasingly confident in their abilities to succeed. In the EYFS, children make excellent progress relative to their ability and needs. These standards are in line with the aims of the school to support the individuality of each child and help them realise their potential.
- 3.3 Pupils of all ages listen attentively and confidently articulate their views and ideas in a logical manner, such as during a debate on the safe use of medicines. Younger pupils competently read aloud to a high standard, using their phonetic knowledge to decode the text and persevere extremely well with the presentation of their written work. In mathematics, older pupils relish problem-solving activities, skilfully applying their understanding of mathematical concepts to tasks set. Pupils enjoy participating in creative opportunities, capably using their initiative to experiment with textual materials to create abstract designs. They speak enthusiastically about physical experiences, such as games and gymnastics and are extremely proud of their achievements. In the EYFS, children are highly articulate. For example, the youngest children cautioned an adult to take care when handling a bracelet, describing it as 'delicate'. During an outdoor activity, older children competently record their findings on clipboards using plausible phonetic attempts to spell unfamiliar words such as centipede and spider. The most able children in the EYFS competently halve numbers to 20 as a mental calculation using their previously acquired numeracy strategies.
- 3.4 Pupils often achieve high standards in relation to their ages and abilities in their activities, such as in academic awards and success in external music examinations and sports activities. Pupils' excellent artwork is displayed in local exhibitions. 
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This is based on the work seen in lessons, pupils' written work in their books and discussions in interviews with pupils. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to those of similar ability. In the EYFS, assessment profiles demonstrate the high levels of progress children make during their time in the setting, with most achieving or exceeding the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. The attainment and progress of pupils with SEND or EAL is particularly strong because of the excellent measures of support that staff put in place, and the individualised precision teaching that specialist staff provide. Those pupils who are particularly able receive additional challenge in lessons, commensurate with their abilities. This enables them to be successful in entrance examinations to their next schools.
- 3.6 Pupils of all ages are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners with excellent attitudes to their work. They take pride in their own achievements and keenly celebrate the successes of others. In the EYFS, children enjoy challenge and investigative learning. They persevere and concentrate extremely well during their activities such as when programming robotic toys to travel in the desired direction.

Pupils behave in an exemplary manner, which strongly supports their overall achievement. They are proud of their school and embrace opportunities for responsibility and those that enable them to use their initiative.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The highly effective curriculum enables the school to fulfil its aim to provide appropriate support to all pupils, including the able, gifted and talented and pupils with SEND or EAL. Pupils benefit from a broad, rich and stimulating curriculum, which comprehensively covers the requisite areas of learning, appropriate for the age of the pupils and their particular needs. In the EYFS, the curriculum makes excellent provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Curriculum planning includes an extensive range of exciting and imaginative opportunities and these take place inside and out. It encourages independence, exploration and problem solving, enabling the children to gain in confidence so that they are extremely well prepared for their move on to the next stage in their learning. The curriculum enables all pupils to acquire a very strong grounding in reading, writing and mathematics, and encourages them to explore, investigate and be creative. Pupils with SEND or EAL, including those children in the EYFS, are identified early, and receive excellent levels of extra support through carefully planned lessons, individual tuition and small group sessions. Comprehensive individual education plans (IEPs) provide clear and achievable learning targets; staff work closely with pupils and their parents to ensure rapid levels of progress and high levels of achievement. More able pupils are given additional tasks in most lessons, which extend their learning extremely well. Teachers set high expectations and provide suitably challenging work. In the EYFS, a range of stimulating learning experiences provides excellent challenges for more able pupils to develop their critical thinking skills.
- 3.9 Time allocated to subjects is very well balanced and clear priority is given to the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Specialist teaching in subjects such as dance, music, computing and physical education enriches and extends the curriculum for pupils of all ages. A comprehensive and effective PSHC programme underpins the school curriculum. Every opportunity is taken to embed this into school life, such as through discrete lessons, assemblies or through other subjects such as science.
- 3.10 There are a wide range of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to respond creatively, follow their interests, and to develop independent thinking, such as formulating questions for a visit to the Imperial War Museum. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' achievements. Curriculum planning includes a wealth of experiences for collaborative and open-ended learning.
- 3.11 A wide range of high quality resources, both indoors and outside, are plentiful across the school. Staff use these skilfully and imaginatively to enhance the learning of pupils of all abilities. The school has recently increased its resources for information and communication technology (ICT) to include the provision of tablet computers. Pupils have access to an appropriate range of non-fiction and fiction books within their classrooms. However, the use of ICT across the whole curriculum and the wider availability of library resources, in order to develop pupils' independent learning and research skills, are more limited.

- 3.12 The extra-curricular provision is excellent, ranging across musical, creative, linguistic and physical activities. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including some older children in the EYFS, keenly participate and enjoy these opportunities, which enable them to further their personal achievements. Many clubs are operated by external specialists, adding further to the quality and range of sporting opportunities being provided by the school's staff. Pupils also benefit from an exciting range of educational visits related to curricular themes, which extend their knowledge and experiences. These include trips to places of historical interest, nature workshops on Hampstead Heath and participation in local concerts. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by strong links with the local community, such as participating in local art and environmental projects. Parents and local residents often visit school to share their personal areas of expertise with the pupils, such as a talk about the importance of an ecological world.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching throughout the school is excellent.
- 3.14 Teaching effectively secures and enhances pupils' progress and fully meets the school's aim to enable each pupil to realise their potential. Teaching has enthusiastic pace and teaching staff plan lessons which set high expectations for pupils' learning. This is exemplified by the high standard of teaching skills across the school, including in the EYFS, as observed during the inspection. Teaching consistently moulds confident, creative and independent thinkers who make significant progress in relation to their abilities. Lessons are characterised by thoughtful planning with skilful open-ended questioning. Teachers provide pupils with a motivating range of tasks and activities which encourage them to develop their thinking and enquiry skills. Highly skilled teaching assistants help to provide excellent levels of additional support and challenge for all pupils. Specialist teachers, who have wide-ranging expertise, greatly enhance pupils' learning experiences. Excellent provision is in place to support pupils' individual learning needs, such as those pupils with SEND, EAL and the more able. Teachers and subject co-ordinators have a thorough knowledge of pupils' progress and attainment and use planning, data and evaluation extremely well when setting high, aspirational targets for pupils.
- 3.15 In the EYFS, dedicated, well-qualified and extremely enthusiastic adults engage and motivate the children. They support or step back as appropriate, but are always on hand to offer praise and encouragement. Expectations are high, but realistic, and everyone aspires to do things the 'Annemount Way'.
- 3.16 Teachers develop stimulating activities and experiences that capture the interest and imagination of their pupils and bring enjoyment to their learning. For example, in a numeracy lesson, pupils constructed their own number-based games, using and applying prior learning of mathematical skills. Teaching methods strongly encourage discussion and collaboration, which helps to significantly develop pupils' problem solving skills. Teachers display a high standard of subject knowledge and lessons proceed with energy, pace and considerable skill. In a literacy lesson, pupils were encouraged to write, refine and perform poetry about a World War II air raid.
- 3.17 In response to recommendations raised in a previous inspection, the school now ensures that systems for assessment across the school are consistent and are regularly monitored. Assessment forms a robust and detailed contribution to the planning, teaching and learning. In the EYFS, planning clearly identifies the learning

objectives for child-initiated play activities. Marking is consistently thorough. The school has developed extensive networks with outside contacts to provide critical and supportive advice when monitoring standards. This enables teachers to scrutinise and assess work accurately so that they make evaluative judgements, which contribute greatly to the high quality of teaching and learning. In the EYFS, the teaching is based on meticulous tracking of each individual's progress so that those with particular needs are fully supported or extended. Teachers ensure that children with EAL or SEND make excellent progress and higher ability children are given challenging activities to extend their learning.

- 3.18 Resources across the school, including in the EYFS, are plentiful and teachers use them extremely well to support teaching approaches. The creative use of display opportunities and language-rich environments in all classrooms are examples of how well teachers use resources. In a French lesson, the use of language games enabled pupils to extend and practise their skills and vocabulary. Pupils with SEND or EAL have effective access to specialised equipment to support their learning, and extension resources challenge learning for the more able pupils. Teachers are dedicated to the education of the pupils in their charge with whom they have excellent, mutually respectful relationships.

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 pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school successfully fulfils its aim to bring out the individuality of each child so that they can realise their potential with self-discipline and respect. The pupils are articulate and self-assured, and show great pride in their school. Their spiritual development is excellent. They take pride in the many attractive displays that celebrate their achievement. Their self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence are extremely well developed and celebrated in weekly assemblies, where awards are presented. Pupils displayed a strong sense of the non-materialistic aspects of life as they listened to the music of 'Vivaldi' in assembly and confidently articulated their reflective thoughts on how the music made them feel.
- 4.3 Pupils display an excellent moral understanding. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and constantly demonstrate readiness to follow the rules that guide their behaviour, which is exemplary. Pupils understand well that the choices they make about their behaviour have consequences. They accept responsibility for the environment, holding an eco-day, coming into school dressed in a costume made entirely of recycled materials. Pupils develop a strong consideration for the needs of others less fortunate than themselves through fund raising for local, national and international charities. They demonstrate a focused sense of commitment through their research into the worthy causes and in their choice of appropriate support activities. In the EYFS, children behave extremely well and learn to make good decisions and choices. They are courteous towards each other, friendly and respectful of the needs of their friends. Children are keen to please and follow the good role modelling of the staff who care for them.
- 4.4 Pupils' excellent social awareness is evident in the ease with which they interact with adults and each other. They are friendly, well mannered and courteous. They demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills and are kind and considerate to one another. Older pupils take responsibility for helping younger pupils at playtime or when moving around school, and relish positions of responsibility, such as being the head boy or girl. On specialist days to celebrate books, older pupils read to younger pupils. The 'Enterprise' initiative empowers pupils to plan a project themselves which they can follow through. In the EYFS, children quickly learn how to play and work co-operatively and respond positively to those around them.
- 4.5 Pupils develop an excellent cultural understanding through visits to the school by public services and other professions from the local community, such as the police and fire service. All pupils, including those in the EYFS have a strong cultural awareness and understanding of their own and other faiths and cultures. They develop this through many opportunities provided within the curriculum such as religious education (RE) and music, and through participation in special events and visits to local places of worship. Children are encouraged to share their languages in circle time for example learning 'Good Morning' in Italian. Parents are invited to the classrooms to read pupils stories both in their own language and about their countries and cultures. They celebrate many cultural festivals such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Rosh Hashanah. Tolerance underpins the pupils' cultural appreciation.

4.6 By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of personal development. During discussions pupils articulate that they feel that the school prepares them very well for their next schools and that they feel confident in managing that change. In the EYFS children's social and emotional development prepares them extremely well for their next stages in education.

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

4.7 The pastoral care of the pupils is excellent.

4.8 The systems and ethos of pastoral care fully support the aims of the school in providing a happy, safe and secure environment. Throughout the school, positive relationships are consistently promoted and modelled by all adults. Relationships between pupils in class and between classes are also excellent. Displays consistently feature 'Golden Rules', positively reinforcing attitudes of respect amongst the pupils for each other and the school. Pupils consider themselves privileged to be at the school. All pupils consider themselves safe and valued by teachers and their peers. Pupils feel well supported and are confident to ask staff for help and guidance when they need it. In the EYFS, the key person system works extremely effectively, helping children to form secure attachments so that they feel safe and secure.

4.9 Healthy lifestyle development is strongly encouraged throughout the school, including for children in the EYFS. Comprehensive guidance is given to parents regarding healthy eating options as all lunches and snacks are brought from home. The garden area provides spacious areas for rest and relaxation, alongside ample space for pupils to enjoy healthy exercise. Additionally, pupils benefit from a good programme for physical education within the curriculum which further enhances their good health.

4.10 Arrangements to guard against harassment and bullying are appropriate and effective. During discussions pupils report that they do not feel that bullying is a problem. They are confident that the school would promptly address any issues that may occur. Any disagreements between pupils are quickly resolved with the sensitive intervention of staff, taking due account of any related difficulty and disability. Systems of rewards engage and motivate pupils extremely well, including those children in the EYFS. On the rare occasions when sanctions are necessary, they are used appropriately and effectively.

4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

4.12 The school's high levels of pastoral care are nurtured by the example of senior leadership who greets parents and pupils daily, and meets pupils over lunch to seek their views. A forum to enable pupils to contribute their thoughts and opinions more formally is not yet in place. However, the school is currently considering approaches to enable them to contribute more fully towards the life of the school.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.14 Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their welfare, including those children in the EYFS, have a strong priority within the day-to-day care that staff provide. Designated staff have appropriate levels of advanced safeguarding training and lead regular training updates for all members of staff, including during induction processes for new staff. These stringent measures ensure that all staff have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Effective links are in place with the local agencies for further support and guidance when necessary. Pupils are safe and all staff have regulatory enhanced checks. However, in the past, regulatory guidance for recruitment checks has not been consistently followed. The school has a suitable policy on safe recruitment and all staff have now been appropriately checked.
- 4.15 The school's senior leadership has stringent systems in place to review the health and safety procedures which contributes significantly to ensuring pupils' safety. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire drills take place regularly and appropriate records are kept. Comprehensive systems for assessing risk cover all areas of the school and any off-site activities in which pupils may participate. The interior accommodation for teaching and learning is suitable for the ages and needs of the pupils who attend. In the EYFS, classrooms offer a secure and safe environment, which make the welcoming, friendly and stimulating atmosphere conducive to learning. Children have ample space to move around in safety. Outside, the learning areas and play facilities are stimulating and spacious. Staggered playtimes mean that children have ample space for physical play and relaxation. Staff supervise pupils extremely well at all times, both indoors and during outside playtimes.
- 4.16 In the EYFS, the strong focus on outdoor learning encourages safe risk taking and problem solving. Children showed an excellent understanding of how to keep safe when using digging tools to find worms for their home made wormeries.
- 4.17 Excellent arrangements are in place for pupils who become unwell or injure themselves whilst at school. All staff have suitable levels of first aid training, including paediatric first aid knowledge for younger pupils. Medical records are comprehensive, and any accidents appropriately reported. Staff provide the best care for pupils and have a thorough understanding of their individual needs and conditions, including those with SEND. Registers for admission and attendance are suitably maintained and stored.

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 proprietorial leadership provides a strong oversight of the working of the school, including for the EYFS. Consequently, the school is mainly successful in meeting its aims and maintaining standards, providing consistently a high quality education, and excellent opportunities for pupils' personal development.
- 5.3 Through careful monitoring, and a prudent focus on financial planning, the proprietor provides strong support, challenge and stimulus for the school's strategic and educational direction. Considerable emphasis is placed on investment in high quality, experienced staff, and learning resources to enrich the quality of teaching and learning. Since the previous inspection, developments have included a revised approach to curriculum planning and assessment, and the re-organisation of the accommodation to provide space for specialist tuition.
- 5.4 The proprietor, who is also the head teacher, suitably discharges her responsibilities for child protection, welfare and health and safety throughout the school. Policies and procedures, updated during the inspection to reflect recent regulatory changes, are regularly scrutinised to ensure their effectiveness. Some deficiencies in the accurate maintenance of the single central register relating to barred list checks were noted during the inspection. These were resolved by the end of the inspection. The proprietor conducts an annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements and keeps a clear audit document on file.

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 good.
- 5.6 The leadership and management have a dedicated focus towards promoting the aims of the school, helping each pupil to realise their potential with self-discipline and respect. All pupils, including those in the EYFS, thrive within the warm and friendly nurturing environment and are well prepared for their future educational experiences. Senior leadership has a paramount focus on keeping pupils of all ages safe and ensuring their welfare. They ensure staff and parents are fully aware of the safeguarding policy and any procedural updates.
- 5.7 The senior leadership provide a clear educational direction for the school. This is reflected in the excellent levels of pupils' achievement and their high standards of personal development. Systems to monitor teaching and learning are effective in practice. Senior leadership meets regularly with staff, observes classroom practice and scrutinises pupils' workbooks. In the EYFS, the extremely strong leadership and management arrangements result in highly effective monitoring of the educational programmes. Supervision meetings between senior leaders and staff take place regularly to support good practice.
- 5.8 Self-evaluation processes are sharply focused to help identify the school's strengths and targets for further improvement and focus on all areas of the school, including

the EYFS. The staff team are fully encouraged to contribute to evaluation processes, such as during their weekly staff meetings. Parents have excellent opportunities to voice their opinions, either through daily informal dialogue with the proprietor, or through the periodic questionnaire surveys that the school circulates. All views are carefully taken into account and appropriately incorporated into the school's development plan. The document successfully supports future priorities, has clear timescales and measures to evaluate success. Following the recommendations from the previous inspection, assessments processes are now closely monitored to ensure consistency across the school. In the EYFS, learning objectives are clearly stated in the planning documents. This helps to ensure the appropriateness of the curriculum and that each pupil's individual needs are well supported, including those with SEND or EAL.

- 5.9 The leadership is successful in recruiting and retaining high quality staff. Staff teamwork is a strong feature of the school, and contributes significantly towards the cohesiveness of the educational and pastoral values of the school. All new staff undergo appropriate levels of induction training on their appointment. This enables them to understand the fundamental requirements of their respective roles and responsibilities, including those for health and safety and ensuring the pupils' welfare. A comprehensive staff handbook provides all staff with useful guidance about policies and routines. While the safety of all pupils, including those in the EYFS is a priority for the school some discrepancies in respect of regulatory barred list checks on the staff appointment register required correction in the course of the inspection.
- 5.10 The recently revised appraisal system provides all staff with valuable opportunities for professional dialogue with the leadership of the school. Meetings include discussions about future professional development opportunities and training to support high quality teaching. The premises are well maintained and resourced appropriately for the ages of the pupils.
- 5.11 From the EYFS onwards, the school's links with parents are excellent. This accords with its aim to provide opportunities for parents to meet and work with each other and teachers, supporting the interests and needs of their children. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those met on inspection, were effusive in their praise of all aspects of the education and support, which the school provides for their children. They were particularly pleased with the progress their children make, the help given in selecting the next school, the range of experiences on offer and the standard of care. They value highly the quality and frequency of the information, which they receive.
- 5.12 From the time they join the school, strong links are established with the parents. These continue with open, easy, timely and two-way communication being hallmarks of the relationships. The school rightly prides itself on an in-depth knowledge and genuine care for the pupils and their families. Any concerns are handled with great care in accordance with published procedures.
- 5.13 Parents have excellent opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They read to classes, are visiting speakers in assemblies and help on outings and with activities such as cooking. There is a very active PTA, which with the form representatives, organises many functions, which contribute to the life of the school. Amongst these are charity events such as Sport Relief, workshops for architectural modelling, the summer fete and a visit by an urban farm.

- 5.14 Information is readily available to current and prospective parents through the website, prospectus, parent handbook, regular newsletters and a termly calendar. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress. Regular meetings focus on assessment, discussions on the best next school options, and address any issues of care or concern. Twice yearly, detailed written reports are published to parents from Reception upwards. These clearly document next steps and targets, as well as pupils' achievements. In the EYFS, excellent partnerships with parents, together with timely consultation with outside agencies when appropriate, ensure that the children's needs are fully met.

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