



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**CRANFORD HOUSE SCHOOL TRUST LIMITED**

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## Cranford House School Trust Limited

At the time of this inspection the Nursery, Little Willows, was in the process of registering with Ofsted, and a separate report for the registered setting will be published on the Ofsted website in due course.

Full Name of School	<b>Cranford House School Trust Limited</b>
DfE Number	<b>931/6083</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY468607</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>280883</b>
Address	<b>Cranford House School Trust Limited Moulsford Wallingford Oxfordshire OX10 9HT</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01491 651218</b>
Fax Number	<b>01491 652557</b>
Email Address	<b>office@cranfordhouse.net</b>
Head	<b>Dr James Raymond</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Natalie Scott-Ely</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 16</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>376</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed 2 to 7; Girls 7 to 16</b>
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): <b>11</b> 5-11: <b>137</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>46</b> 11-18: <b>182</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Lin Lawson</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>07 Oct 2014 to 10 Oct 2014</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 October 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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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 chair of 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 Pamela Leech	Reporting Inspector
Dr Tracy Johnson	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Mr Richard Marshall	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Nicholas Rees	Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)
Mr Alastair Reid	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS/ISA school)
Miss Lucy Sumner	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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

- 1.1 Cranford House School Trust Limited, founded in 1931, is an independent day school catering for boys aged from two to seven and for girls aged from two to sixteen. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. In 1954 the school moved to its present site where it is set in 14 acres of grounds and playing fields between Oxford and Reading. The senior and junior schools are adjacent to each other, with a newly acquired, purpose-designed Nursery, Little Willows, occupying its own site a short distance from the main campus. The school aims to provide a dynamic, opportunity-rich education in a welcoming and nurturing community in order to draw out the natural potential of each pupil. Motivation, challenge, confidence, happiness and generosity of spirit are the core values which the school seeks to promote within all aspects of school life. Based on traditional moral values, the school welcomes pupils of all faiths or of none, seeking to prepare them for the challenges and responsibilities of the future and to inspire them to achieve at each stage of their individual journey.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has undergone considerable development and refurbishment. Science facilities have been remodelled to include an extra laboratory, the Atrium has been completed, with a library and information and communication technology (ICT) suite, and dining areas have been extended and refurbished. A new artificial grass pitch has been laid and the sports hall building is in the final stages of construction.
- 1.3 There are currently 376 pupils on roll: 47 boys and 329 girls. Of these, 57 children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Pupils come from across south Oxfordshire and west Berkshire, within a 20-mile radius of the school, and are from a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds. Parents are predominantly professional or self-employed.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school, as indicated by standardised tests, is above the national average, with a broad range of abilities represented. There are 79 pupils who have been identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom are provided with learning support. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. No pupil has English as an additional language.

- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school from Years 3 to 11 and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school in the EYFS and Years 1 and 2, and its NC equivalence, are shown in the following tables.

***Nursery***

School	NC name
Acorns	Nursery (2 to 3 years)
Willows	Nursery/Reception (3 to 5 years)

***Years 1 and 2***

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 1
Form 2	Year 2

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

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

- 2.1 Cranford House is highly successful in meeting its aims to encourage all pupils to strive for excellence within a nurturing and welcoming community. Children in the EYFS make an excellent start to their education and thrive in the warm and caring atmosphere. Throughout the school, pupils develop a positive and energetic attitude towards their learning; they apply their knowledge confidently in lessons and independent study, supported by excellent teaching. The broad and well-balanced curriculum fully supports the pupils' learning and is complemented by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully implemented. Thorough assessment procedures allow staff to understand the individual needs of pupils. Pupils with SEND are extremely well supported. More able pupils are identified but challenging work to extend their learning is not consistently provided. Lesson planning is comprehensive and allows all pupils to make good progress. Pupils are highly competent users of ICT and routinely incorporate their skills in their learning. Pupils are articulate, polite and confident. They enjoy their lessons and take great pride in their work.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. Their behaviour is of a high standard and they show respect and kindness towards each other as a matter of course. They relish opportunities to take responsibility and demonstrate an eagerness to contribute to their community. They are proud of their school and appreciate the efforts of their teachers to promote their well-being and enjoyment. Pupils are extremely well supported by the high level of pastoral care throughout the school and feel confident that staff will always help and guide them. Excellent measures are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent and governors are highly supportive of the school. They discharge their legal responsibilities effectively and maintain excellent oversight. Procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and for safeguarding pupils are rigorously applied. Management structures have been redefined, as recommended at the previous inspection, and leadership and management are highly effective in promoting the vision of the school. The pupils' educational and pastoral needs are fully supported by the comprehensive systems for assessment and tracking. Links with parents are excellent.



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

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

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

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

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Provide tasks and activities of suitable challenge to extend the learning of the more able pupils.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils reach high standards and demonstrate an intellectual curiosity and eagerness to learn that are in accordance with the school's aims to inspire them to achieve at each stage of their individual learning journey. Children in the Nursery count groups of objects and are beginning to form their letters. In Reception, children confidently count to ten and can spell simple words. Older pupils are willing listeners and express their opinions freely and persuasively. They are able to write fluently in all subjects, demonstrating a competent understanding of grammar, spelling and punctuation. They reach high standards in reading and achieve well in mathematics. They are able to apply logical and mathematical understanding to scientific subjects and are highly competent users of ICT.
- 3.3 Pupils think logically and work independently; younger senior school pupils effectively designed classrooms for the future in ICT. Paintings and models displayed around the school demonstrate the creativity of pupils in their artwork. In the Nursery, children made an effective wall display of a tree using their painted fingertips as leaves. Pupils approach co-operative learning with purpose and maturity, for example when participating in choral rehearsals for the school musical and listening to an ensemble playing in assembly. Pupils of all ages participate in sports and other physical activities with enthusiasm and success.
- 3.4 Many pupils receive tuition in drama, dance and music, achieving high standards in examinations. They take part in successful school dramatic productions and perform to a high level in school choirs, ensembles and orchestras. Pupils participate in a wide range of sports and inter-schools sports competitions, achieving notable success at national and county level in a variety of disciplines. Pupils engage in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), with many proceeding to the silver level.
- 3.5 The attainment of pupils in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but based on the evidence available from discussions with pupils and from scrutiny of their work, performance in lessons and the results of standardised tests of attainment in English and mathematics, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Most pupils proceed to the senior school. The following analysis uses the national data for 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative data is available. Performance at GCSE, although indicating a slight decline from 2011 to 2013, has been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Results at International GCSE overall are in line with worldwide averages. The level of attainment at GCSE and the nationally standardised progress data that is available indicate that pupils make progress that is high, relative to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Almost all pupils achieve entry to the sixth form of their choice, with some gaining scholarships. Individually tailored programmes of study enable pupils with SEND to make excellent progress. More able pupils extend their understanding and learning within and beyond the curriculum when they have suitably challenging opportunities to do so but these are not consistently provided.

- 3.6 Pupils in the junior and senior schools have highly positive attitudes towards their learning. Children in the EYFS are active and eager learners. All pupils throughout the school enjoy working independently as well as together, and take pride in the presentation of their work. Their behaviour, care and support for one another are excellent.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 In all years the school provides a curriculum that is highly effective in its coverage of every area of learning and that is extremely well supported by the range of extra-curricular activities. The school fully meets its aims to educate the whole child academically and socially, enabling all to enter confidently into the next stage of their education. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, most parents indicated the view that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects and educational experiences.
- 3.9 The EYFS curriculum is broad and varied. It offers children the choice of a wide range of activities in a purpose-built and extremely well-resourced setting. Weekly specialist music and physical education sessions greatly enhance the children's sensory development. Access to individual ICT equipment helps to promote their technological skills. Free-flow sessions, where children move between the classroom and the outside areas, allow them to explore their learning in a variety of environments. The curriculum in both junior and senior schools offers an excellent range of subjects. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is fully embedded within the curriculum and is highly effective in its coverage of all aspects. Pupils feel well supported by guidance when making their subject choices for GCSE and when selecting a sixth-form college in order to continue their studies to A level.
- 3.10 Throughout the school the curriculum is well adapted for pupils with SEND, with support provided on an individual basis. Suitable provision is made for more able pupils in some lessons but they do not have consistent opportunities to extend their learning.
- 3.11 The curriculum is enhanced through external resources such as the outdoor learning environment and sensory garden for younger pupils, and the Willow Courtyard, where older pupils are able to enjoy their leisure periods. The use and study of ICT are thoroughly embedded within the curriculum for all ages and are an integral part of most subjects. The thoughtfully arranged new library includes provision for private study, is well stocked with both fiction and non-fiction books, and is located in a central position within the school.
- 3.12 The excellent range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. Daily clubs and activities are enthusiastically attended and include a variety of sports, such as hockey, tennis and judo, with football for the younger pupils. Academic clubs include science, technology, engineering, mathematics and Mandarin. Creative activities include an art club, where an innovative range of skills, such as bobbin lace making, is explored, music and drama clubs. Pupils are encouraged to make visits to local businesses and theatres, and to participate in many local events, for example a chemistry festival and a gifted and talented preparatory school quiz, in order to broaden their experience of the world around them. School trips, for

example a choir visit to Rome and a hockey trip to Holland, enhance pupils' understanding of different cultures and ways of life.

- 3.13 Links with the local community are strong, and talks given by visiting speakers allow pupils to extend their learning beyond the classroom to consider national and international issues. Opportunities to raise money for local, national and international charities enable pupils to develop co-operative, organisational and leadership skills appropriate to their age, as for example, their recent fund raising, which has focused on providing support for a local specialist hospital.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 The school provides teaching that is imaginative and vibrant, in line with its aims. Almost all pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that they make good progress in their work and that their teachers help them to learn. The responses of most parents and inspection evidence support these views.
- 3.16 Throughout the school, teaching is highly planned and imaginatively resourced. At all stages, teaching demonstrates a thorough understanding of the needs of pupils, enabling them to work confidently and independently. Teaching in the EYFS demonstrates a clear understanding of the way children learn and develop, adapting methods and activities to promote their learning and fully meeting the needs of individual children. In the junior and senior schools, lively, well-paced teaching engages pupils and enables their progress.
- 3.17 Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and they constantly require pupils to develop their own use of subject-specific language and skills. Teaching imparts knowledge with energy and commitment, inspiring pupils to approach their learning with enthusiasm and vigour. Throughout the school, a strength of the teaching lies in the quality of the relationships between the teaching staff and pupils, and the level of personalised support given to pupils.
- 3.18 Teaching at all levels makes excellent use of ICT to enhance learning, through subject-specific software and extensive and appropriate application of interactive whiteboards. Teaching makes full use of the resources available through the virtual learning environment that has been specifically developed by the school. Independent learning is encouraged in the EYFS, with children using individual tablet computers as part of their project work.
- 3.19 The school has a clear marking policy that is adhered to across the curriculum and that is highly effective in encouraging the pupils to consider ways to improve their work. At its best, marking is a positive and constructive dialogue between pupil and teacher, with comments from both responded to and followed up regularly. Regular assessment takes place throughout the school, with both internal and external data being used effectively to monitor the pupils' progress and determine realistic targets for improvement. In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils reported that their homework does not always help them to learn. Through scrutiny of their work and discussions with staff and pupils, inspectors found homework tasks to be appropriate and helpful.
- 3.20 Support for pupils with SEND is strong and well monitored, and facilitates prompt, appropriate and empowering intervention in the pupils' learning. This enables excellent transition through the different year groups. Individual and class strategies

are carefully planned and managed to meet the pupils' needs. Teaching fully meets the requirements of pupils with statements of special educational needs. A few parents responding to the questionnaire felt that more able pupils do not receive appropriate support. Inspection evidence, from observations of lessons and scrutiny of work, shows that the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged because the work they are given is not tailored sufficiently carefully to take account of their potential.

- 3.21 Since the previous inspection, successful training of staff has enabled lessons to become less teacher directed, and this has encouraged pupils to take intellectual risks and to learn in a more independent fashion. The school has thereby fully met recommendations made at that time.

## **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 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent, fully reflecting the school's aims. Pupils develop high levels of self-confidence and self-awareness in an atmosphere that nurtures participation at all levels. In a recent event, pupils from Reception to Year 10 joined together in mixed classes to consider the events of World War 1, concluding the day with a deeply reflective service composed by the pupils. Pupils are confident communicators and relish opportunities to debate and discuss a variety of issues. Pupils' choral performance of a selection of sacred music created an atmosphere of awe shared by participants and audience alike.
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate strong moral awareness through their excellent behaviour and well-developed sense of right and wrong. From the earliest days in the EYFS, children are encouraged to make good choices of behaviour through the use of 'Golden Rules', and staff act as role models, leading by example to encourage children to be polite and thoughtful. Throughout the junior and senior schools, pupils understand and appreciate the school's core values and the codes of conduct and keenly apply them in their daily interactions with each other. Pupils discuss moral issues openly, such as in a science lesson when the ethics surrounding cloning were rigorously debated. There is a strong culture within the school of older pupils supporting younger ones, with generosity of spirit an integral part of the school's philosophy.
- 4.4 The social development of the pupils is excellent. An overwhelming majority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that there are many opportunities for them to undertake positions of responsibility. Children in the EYFS enjoy being given responsibilities for tidying up and snacks, and pupils in the junior and senior schools are actively encouraged to become involved in the daily routines of the school. More senior pupils apply for posts of responsibility, submitting written applications and standing for election. Democratically elected pupils represent their year groups on the school council. Pupils discover the challenges of leadership by organising sporting and performing arts events or through participation in the DofE. They show a strong awareness of others less fortunate than themselves by planning functions to raise money for charities of their choice or by participating in World Challenge trips abroad.
- 4.5 The pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. They show kindness and tolerance towards each other and gain an understanding of the diversity of different faiths and cultures through the religious studies programme. Talks given by visiting speakers enrich their appreciation of the world around them. Children in the EYFS enjoyed hearing about Divali and older pupils were stimulated by a talk given by a Buddhist monk. Junior pupils encounter Indian life and culture as part of their geography curriculum. Pupils gain a clear understanding of British culture through the PSHCE curriculum and through educational visits, such as to the Houses of Parliament.
- 4.6 Pupils achieve high standards of personal development by the time they leave the school. They are confident and at ease with themselves, with one another and with adults. Children in the EYFS show tolerance for one another and happily progress into the next stage of their learning. All pupils are proud of their school and show significant respect for other members of the community.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 A highly effective pastoral system accords with the school's aims to create a family atmosphere where each pupil feels valued and supported. Staff in the EYFS work with parents to make the children's first experiences of school life happy and successful. Their key people understand the children well, and help them to learn to manage their own personal needs and become independent and confident. In the junior and senior schools, the well-developed tutorial system provides a strong network of individual support and guidance. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the care and support their children receive.
- 4.9 The school's motto 'Through the willow to the heights' constantly reinforced by the daily visual reminder of a willow tree in the grounds, epitomises the emphasis on striving for excellence in every aspect. This is clearly manifest in the effort made by staff and pupils to develop positive relationships. Vertical house systems and mentoring schemes enable older pupils to support younger ones, and relationships are extremely positive, helpful and considerate. Pupils feel well supported and valued by staff, and are confident that any concerns they may have will be quickly and thoughtfully addressed. Carefully planned PSHCE lessons allow pupils to explore sensitive issues in an open and positive way.
- 4.10 In response to the questionnaire a small minority of pupils expressed that the school does not ask for or respond to their opinions. Inspectors found there to be a variety of ways in which pupils express themselves. Pupils regularly vote to select charities to support, and make a valuable contribution to their school community through the school council, as prefects and in positions of responsibility within their houses. The school has excellent provision to promote good behaviour.
- 4.11 In questionnaire responses, a few pupils felt that teachers are not always fair with sanctions and rewards. Examination of records indicated clearly that sanctions are applied fairly and consistently. In discussions, pupils were highly appreciative of the encouragement they receive through the generous reward system. All parents responding to the questionnaire praised the way in which the school achieves high standards of behaviour. In response to the questionnaire, a few parents expressed the view that the school does not handle cases of bullying well. Through examination of records and discussions with staff and pupils, inspectors concluded that the school has effective measures to guard against bullying and that appropriate procedures are followed sensitively and carefully. Pupils report that bullying is not acceptable behaviour, and most responding to the questionnaire indicated the view that the school deals with any incidents quickly and fairly.
- 4.12 The school promotes healthy living most effectively. Children in the EYFS enjoy the nutritious and wholesome meals and snacks provided by the school and confidently explain the importance of fresh air and exercise. The choice, variety and quality of food at lunch are excellent and pupils discuss healthy options in their PSHCE lessons. The benefits of fitness are promoted through physical education and games lessons, in addition to the varied activities programme.
- 4.13 The school has a clear and appropriate plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 The school makes excellent arrangements to promote the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils, including children in the EYFS. Rigorous systems for training staff in child protection matters are followed by designated staff, supported by the local safeguarding board. Safeguarding policies and procedures are thorough and appropriately implemented, and records are efficiently maintained.
- 4.16 Measures to minimise the risk of fire are effective; regular risk assessments and weekly testing of fire alarms are supported by fire drills, and all procedures are appropriately recorded. Electrical equipment is regularly tested and records maintained. Risk assessments for buildings and grounds are comprehensive and updated on an annual basis. Toilets with hand basins are conveniently sited and there are suitable changing rooms appropriately designated for boys and girls. Suitable disabled facilities, including a lift and stair hoist, are in place. Drinking water is always available.
- 4.17 Appropriate policies are implemented to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils in school and on educational trips and visits. A suitable number of staff have received training in first aid, and those with responsibility for younger children have received paediatric first-aid training. Pupils who are unwell are suitably cared for in appropriate facilities until they are collected by parents. Admission and attendance records are suitably maintained and stored, and rigorous systems are in place to register attendance and check absentees.



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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is highly supportive of the school's aims to provide an enriching educational experience for all pupils. Governors have a clear vision for the future of the school, which is embedded in detailed development and strategic planning. Governors offer a wide range of experience and expertise, and undertake rigorous induction and training. Many have strong personal links with the school and all live in the immediate locality.
- 5.3 Governors are effective in maintaining a perceptive oversight of the school, including the EYFS, through strong finance and education committees, and invest in high quality staffing, resources and facilities. They achieve excellent insight into the working of the school through regular visits to the EYFS, junior and senior classrooms and by supporting school events. They hold discussions with staff and pupils and are accessible to parents. Governors work closely with senior managers, offering a high level of support and challenge in addition to positive stimulus for improvement. They work hard to fulfil their commitment to excellence in all areas.
- 5.4 Governors are conscientious in discharging their responsibilities for child protection and welfare, health and safety matters throughout the school. Procedures for staff appointments are rigorously implemented and the related checks appropriately recorded. All governors undertake an annual review of the safeguarding policy and practice.

### **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 excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are highly effective in enabling the school to meet its aims. Recent changes in senior management have renewed the school's enthusiasm and promoted a new sense of purpose and educational direction. Management structures have been redefined, as recommended at the previous inspection, and now promote consistency through a focused whole-school awareness and approach in each department, including the EYFS. As a result, pupils develop excellent personal qualities, strive to achieve their best, and feel safe and happy. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and consistently implemented, with close reference to the governing body. Managers have implemented positive strategies to enhance the provision for pupils with SEND, although provision for the more able pupils is not yet fully effective.
- 5.7 Heads of department consistently monitor standards of teaching and learning across all subject areas. Planning is thorough and excellent schemes of work promote exciting learning opportunities for all pupils. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the pupils' ability and progress are rigorous. Teaching staff benefit from regular formal appraisal and continuing opportunities for professional development. Induction training and guidance for new staff are effectively implemented.

- 5.8 Senior management is highly effective in ensuring that children in the EYFS are able to enjoy their experience in a secure environment. Self-evaluation is rigorous and effective, with all staff identifying priorities for the next academic year and further long-term challenging targets for improvement. Systems for professional supervision and for the appraisal and monitoring of EYFS staff are in place. Staff are well qualified and further professional training is actively encouraged.
- 5.9 Appropriate systems for the recruitment of suitable staff are meticulously applied, and all checks to ensure the suitability of governors, staff and others are thoroughly undertaken. All staff receive regular and thorough training in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Policies are regularly reviewed to ensure that they meet requirements and are appropriately implemented.
- 5.10 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The strong links in the EYFS enable excellent, stable relationships to develop with parents and these are maintained as their children progress through the school. Responses to the questionnaire show that parents are highly supportive of the school. They are particularly happy with the standard of behaviour, the range of the curriculum and enrichment activities, and the quality of care their children receive.
- 5.11 In questionnaire responses most parents expressed satisfaction with the amount of information they are given about their children's progress. Inspection evidence showed that the quantity and quality of such communication are appropriate.
- 5.12 Parents are able to participate in the life of the school through a wide range of activities. The thriving parent-teacher association supports the school through fund raising and organising a selection of events for both pupils and parents throughout the year. Parents are warmly welcomed to matches, performances and other special occasions, and are kept up to date through weekly newsletters and a termly magazine. Parent handbooks produced for each section of the school provide much valued and useful material. A comprehensive and informative website, a series of open mornings and a range of school prospectuses provide the parents of current and prospective pupils with further detailed information about the school.
- 5.13 In the EYFS, parents have effective daily contact with staff at 'drop-off' and collection times. Parents of older pupils may make appointments to see any member of staff at a convenient time. The school provides full, detailed reports, which are complemented by regular parents' meetings. A few parents responding to the questionnaire expressed the opinion that the school does not handle parental concerns well. Inspectors found that the school has an appropriate complaints policy and examination of records showed that the policy is effectively implemented.

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