



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Joseph's School

Full Name of School	St Joseph's School		
DfE Number	908/6040		
Registered Charity Number	289048		
Address	St Joseph's School St Stephen's Hill Launceston Cornwall PL15 8HN		
Telephone Number	01566 772580		
Email Address	pa@stjosephscornwall.co.uk		
Head Teacher	Mrs Sue Rowe		
Chair of Governors	Mrs Margaret Warren		
Age Range	3 to 16		
Total Number of Pupils	232		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (90 boys; 142 girls)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	25	5-11: 84
	11-16:	123	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	232	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Sue Marks		
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 ISI inspection was in October 2008.

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 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

Mr Michael Buchanan	Reporting Inspector
Mr Graham Reeder	Team Inspector (former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Steven Boyes	Team Inspector (Principal, ISA college)
Dr Stephen Wilkinson	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr Chris Manville	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Joseph's School was founded in Launceston, a small market town, as a convent school by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart in the early 1900s. From 1915 until 1984 it was run by the Dominican Order, when it became an independent charitable trust under a board of governors, with a lay head teacher. The school governors, led by the chair, currently consists of seven foundation governors and five parent governors, all of whom are trustees of the St Joseph's School charitable trust.
- 1.2 The school aims to nurture every child as an individual, enabling them to reach their full potential in a secure, positive and fair environment. It aims to give equal emphasis and value to academic achievement and to the wider areas of the curriculum, including the arts, sport and music, through teaching that fosters a love of learning. In a community that maintains its traditions in partnership with parents, teachers and the wider community, the school encourages pupils to become confident, competent individuals ready to face the adult world.
- 1.3 The school provides education for 109 boys and girls aged from 3 to 11 in the junior school and 123 aged from 11 to 16 in the senior school. The Nursery and Reception classes make up the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in which there are 17 boys and 8 girls. Pupils leaving the school at 16 move on to a variety of colleges and schools in the area. Since the previous inspection a new chair of governors and new head teacher have been appointed and the senior school now takes boys as well as girls. The facilities have been expanded to include an additional sports field and an outdoor classroom in an orchard for the EYFS. New facilities for design technology and information and communication technology (ICT) have been developed.
- 1.4 The ability range of the junior school is above the national average, with most pupils having an ability that is at least above average. The ability profile of the senior school is also above the national average, although with a wider spread of abilities than in the junior school. Twenty-seven pupils are identified as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and one has a statement of special educational needs. Two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Most pupils come from the surrounding countryside and towns. They are predominantly white European in origin and from professional, business and farming backgrounds.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The achievement and learning of the pupils in all sections of the school, including the EYFS, is good and reflects the aims of the school to nurture each individual and to foster academic and wider achievements equally. The school provides a highly tailored range of opportunities in the curriculum for children and pupils of all ages and a good variety of activities, both of which greatly support their achievements. Pupils of all ages have excellent attitudes to learning in that they are enthusiastic, committed and engaged in school. The achievement and progress of children in the EYFS are particularly strong as result of the individualised planning that supports their learning. This is equally true for the progress of pupils with SEND throughout the junior and senior schools and the EAL children in the EYFS. Teaching is most often excellent or good. In some lessons opportunities for the most able pupils to extend their learning are not effectively planned. They are often required to work in the same way and at the same pace as all other pupils, therefore their progress is less rapid. Marking is highly positive but often fails to provide sufficient guidance on how pupils can improve and develop their work. Attainment in national tests and at GCSE is above the average for pupils of similar abilities in maintained schools and hence they make good progress.
- 2.2 Children in the EYFS and pupils in the junior and senior schools have excellent personal development, which is supported by highly effective, personalised pastoral care so that they are well prepared for moving on to the next stage of their education. This is a particularly strong feature of their experience. Pupils have an acute awareness of and consideration for other pupils and for adults; they are well behaved and extremely polite. Pupils readily accept responsibility. From a very early age, they are considerate and confident when expressing views. Some concerns were raised in the questionnaires about the effectiveness of the school's approach when dealing with bullying. The inspection found that the systems in place are rigorous and issues are resolved to the satisfaction of most pupils and their parents.
- 2.3 In recent years, the governors, leadership and management of the school have worked diligently and in close collaboration to develop the school and improve the educational experience for pupils. In this they have been successful to a good degree as shown by the achievements and personal development of the pupils. They have successfully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection report by providing greatly improved resources for ICT and in support of pupils with SEND, for example. Detailed planning for the future takes place and the governors and senior leadership are effective in providing the impetus and energy for further development. However, a number of statutory requirements have not been fully met. Specifically, the checking of staff prior to employment has not been done in a systematic, timely manner nor have records been kept fully and accurately in the single central register of appointments and risk management of some of the facilities and services is inconsistent and therefore ineffective. The governors and the leadership of the school have swiftly taken steps to ensure these failings are addressed. Parents and pupils are highly positive about their experience of the school with a large majority of parents happy to recommend it.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- ensure that the required recruitment checks, including barred list, qualifications, references, employment history, identity, medical, right to work in the UK and overseas checks are made on all staff, supply staff and volunteers as applicable, before they begin work at the school [Part 4, paragraphs 19(2)(a)(b) and 19(3); 20(2)(c); 22(3)(b)(c)(e)(f) and 22(4) under the Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors; and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7(a)(b), under Welfare, health and safety of pupils];
- ensure suitable arrangements are made to manage the risk associated with the school's water services [Part 3, paragraph 11 under Welfare, health and safety of pupils].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

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

1. Ensure that teaching meets the individual needs of the most able and closely monitor the quality of their learning.
2. Ensure marking consistently provides guidance to pupils on how to improve.
3. Ensure the governors and leadership of the school systematically monitor and evaluate the quality of the pupils' experience and the effectiveness of the school's systems.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The overall quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 The pupils' enthusiastic and successful participation in curricular and extra-curricular activities demonstrates that the school successfully meets its aim to give value equally to academic achievement and to the wider areas of the curriculum. At best, pupils achieve excellent progress in knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils perform to a very high level in music. Pupils and teams from the school achieve well in a variety of sports, including county and national representation in tennis, badminton, riding, swimming, athletics and netball.
- 3.3 Pupils display sophisticated speaking and listening skills, as seen in lessons, in discussions and over lunch. In the EYFS pupils described the pictures they had made out of twigs, grass, leaves and blossom in the orchard. These children participate enthusiastically in role play, developing meaningful scenarios, and incorporating independent writing. Older pupils can think logically and their creative skills are very well developed. For example, in photography when pupils produced photographs with highly distorted perspective. In the EYFS, children enjoy their time, making suitable choices from the extensive range of available resources. As a result, children are often engaged in independent, purposeful play. Pupils of all ages use problem-solving and critical thinking skills well. They use mathematical language to describe their experiences and can explain how they solve problems. EYFS children form letters accurately and use their knowledge of letters and sounds to decode tricky words such as paramedic. Pupils achieve success in gaining places at schools and colleges post-GCSE, with a number of pupils being awarded competitive places at a specialist music school.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012 for national tests at age 11 and 2011 to 2013 for GCSE results. Respectively, these are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at age 11 have been good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. Results have shown improvement since 2010 with English results in 2012 being well above the national average for maintained primary schools. In 2013, these standards were maintained in English with 70% of pupils achieving Level 5 in writing. GCSE results have been above the national average in relation to girls in maintained schools. In 2013, over two-fifths of all grades awarded were at A*/A. These results, together with observations in lessons and work books, indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. All children in the EYFS, including those with EAL, make good progress reaching levels of attainment at least in line with, and in most cases above, national expectations for their ages as a result of the close attention they receive.
- 3.5 Pupils with SEND make very good progress relative to their ability, as seen in national tests and GCSE results, indicating that measures put in place since the previous inspection to support these pupils have had a positive impact. In lessons, the individual needs of SEND pupils are well met, but opportunities to extend the most able are less well exploited. As a result, these pupils do not always make the progress they might.

3.6 Pupils of all ages show very positive attitudes to learning and are particularly enthusiastic, as shown by their positive responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. They participate well in discussions and often seek out the support of teachers outside lessons. They work well together, regularly organising their own groups, and listen intently to one another's views. They also work well independently and can pursue individual projects to successful fruition, such as in history where visual presentations were prepared with great care and attention to detail. Pupils grasp opportunities eagerly as indicated, for example, by the strong competition to take part in the Ten Tors expedition team.

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

3.7 The contribution of the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

3.8 The curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities. The EYFS setting makes excellent provision to meet the needs of the range of children who attend.

3.9 The curriculum offers a broad base of subjects and experiences with an appropriate allocation of time given to each. It successfully meets the school's aim to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability. High quality, imaginative resources and well-organised classrooms stimulate purposeful play in the EYFS and direct access to a secure garden area allows children to extend their learning outside. A nearby orchard is used exceptionally well as an outdoor classroom to explore the natural environment and to enhance children's learning across the curriculum.

3.10 A particular strength of the curriculum is the flexible approach the school takes, with great emphasis given to suiting the curriculum to the needs of individual pupils. For example, themes, such as 'people who help us', are carefully planned in the EYFS to provide opportunities for children of all abilities. Specialist teaching in music, French and swimming also significantly enhance the EYFS. In the junior school, the curriculum is well co-ordinated across subjects, as seen for example in art lessons where pupils produced record covers from the 1950s, having studied that period previously in history lessons. There is substantial provision for the arts throughout the school. Senior pupils take three separate sciences as part of the core GCSE curriculum but this requirement is occasionally relaxed where this is in the best interests of the pupil concerned. Catering and child development provide alternatives at GCSE. Setting arrangements also operate flexibly, with sets at times maintained with very small numbers in order to best suit the needs of the individual. This approach allows individual tailoring to permeate many lessons to the benefit of the pupils.

3.11 The curriculum is well supported by extra-curricular provision, which offers many opportunities for pupils to discover and develop abilities in areas such as horse riding, chess and choral singing, as well as more traditional games and activities. Music is a particular strength, and pupils can participate in a variety of choirs and ensembles as they move up through the school. There is also good provision for clubs and activities. Many worthwhile trips are offered, including to the zoo to see endangered species and to Falmouth to study local artists. These visits often make good use of links with the community such as in joint choirs or fund-raising activities. Invited speakers successfully stimulate the pupils' interest in a variety of areas, for example, during a recent visit from university scientists.

- 3.12 The school's provision for pupils with SEND is excellent and much improved since the previous inspection. An extremely thorough monitoring and tracking system works effectively to ensure that all pupils are routinely screened and checked for SEND, and that appropriate action is taken once a pupil is identified. For example, by providing a teaching assistant for a pupil or group of pupils, as well as one-to-one lessons where additional support is necessary. All pupils on the SEND register have individual education plans which are reviewed termly by teachers and pupils together. There is a register for able, gifted and talented pupils but the school is less effective in meeting their needs.
- 3.13 Provision for ICT is significantly improved since the previous inspection and is good throughout the school. For example, junior pupils used tablet computers to good effect to create quick response (QR) codes, and senior school pupils used laptop computers to develop a melody using music composition software. Good careers guidance is provided through a range of opportunities based on a personal portfolio developed throughout a child's time at the school, with involvement for parents at appropriate times such as when GCSE subject choices are made.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.15 Teaching effectively promotes pupils' learning and fulfils the aims of the school. Much of the teaching is excellent or good with a minority that is sound.
- 3.16 Teaching shows good, and in many cases, excellent subject knowledge. Teachers are often passionate and communicate this to pupils who, as a result, undertake tasks with great enthusiasm and focus. This is equally true in the EYFS where staff are engaging and animated, often joining in with children's spontaneous play to extend and develop their ideas. In the best examples of teaching in the EYFS, skilful questioning encourages thinking, communication and language skills and promotes further play and exploration, problem solving and creativity. Teachers throughout the school know their pupils well and often use this knowledge to engage their interests.
- 3.17 With very few exceptions, there are high expectations of pupil behaviour to which the pupils respond. Behaviour management is unobtrusive and effective, helping to create a productive learning environment. There is an excellent rapport between pupils and teachers and this engenders a lack of self-consciousness about volunteering answers and participation more generally. This is a particular strength of the school. The few pupils who are reticent in lessons are successfully included by the use of directed questions. Pupils express considerable gratitude for the willingness of staff to give them time outside of lessons to provide help and assistance. Pre-inspection questionnaire feedback from parents and pupils showed a very high level of satisfaction about the additional support provided and, as a result, the progress made by pupils.
- 3.18 Throughout the school, teaching encourages pride in the presentation of work. There are significant variations across subjects in the volume of work produced. Equally, there is significant variation in the pace of lessons with some missing opportunities for greater progress as a result. A number of pupils disagreed in the pre-inspection questionnaire that homework helps them to learn. The inspection found that much was learned through homework exercises but that the more able pupils were not always challenged by the demands of the work. Highly effective

assessment in the EYFS, based on reflective observations, and regular input from parents, provides an accurate record of children's progress towards the early learning goals. As a result, planning accurately reflects children's stages of development. Sensitive support for children with EAL enables them to make particularly good progress. Generally, the tracking of pupils' progress and assessment is well developed with clear targets consistently set in reports. However, marking of work in the junior and senior schools varies in its effectiveness to promote improvement. At best, comments are encouraging, constructive and linked to clearly defined areas for improvement. Particularly good examples of this were seen in literacy and numeracy books for junior school pupils. In many cases, most often in the senior school, annotations went little beyond a mark and an encouraging comment.

- 3.19 Lessons are generally well planned with clear learning objectives that are often explained to the pupils. Teaching uses a variety of methods to help pupils engage. Good examples of this were the use of mime in language lessons to reinforce new vocabulary and role play to explore the nature of the relationships between central characters in *Of Mice and Men*. A range of resources, including many visual prompts, are used imaginatively as stimulus throughout the school. The use of ICT as a means of engaging pupils' interests has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to work individually and collaboratively. In combination with the small class sizes this enables teachers to provide pupils with individual support to good effect.
- 3.20 Teaching meets the needs of pupils with SEND very effectively, including the provision set out in any statement of special educational needs, and incorporates the valuable use of teaching assistants. The planning for the more able pupils is less effective. These pupils are required to work at the same pace and in the same way as other pupils; consequently, they are not routinely challenged and stretched, which limits their progress.

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' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils have a good standard of personal development by the time they leave the school and children in the EYFS are well prepared for moving on.
- 4.3 Throughout the school pupils are articulate, confident, courteous, friendly and supportive of each other and show compassion to those less fortunate than themselves. The school has created a warm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils grow up happily and form good friendships. In all sections of the school, including the EYFS, children co-operate extremely well, taking turns and working together. Pupils comment on the positive relationships they have with their teachers and each other. They are confident boys and girls who demonstrate strong self-esteem in their discussions with adults and peers and a clear understanding of the world beyond school. They show great sensitivity to the needs of others, for instance, in their involvement with charitable fund raising through their sponsored run, cake sales and choral events.
- 4.4 The moral and spiritual awareness of pupils are strongly demonstrated by their behaviour and sensitive response to experiences such as singing and creative art. From an early age they demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong and respect the need for rules.
- 4.5 The pupils' social awareness is outstanding. Pupils are supportive of one another and have highly friendly relationships which promote the sense of community within the school. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is also excellent. Throughout the school pupils understand the importance of consideration for the beliefs and values of others. There are regular trips and residential visits which develop their appreciation of other cultures through music, dance and art. Pupils perform with confidence at a variety of venues including the Royal Albert Hall, St Mark's Basilica in Venice and various local churches, which provides valued links with the community.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Pastoral care is a particular strength of the school. Throughout the school, committed and caring staff provide effective support and guidance for pupils and children in accordance with the school's aims. Pupils trust their teachers and carers. The highly effective key person system in the EYFS ensures new children are helped to settle quickly. Adults know the children extremely well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Diversity and respect for others are effectively promoted. Pupils in all areas of the school are taught to be healthy and take exercise. For instance, in the EYFS, the children regularly drink water to 'keep their brains awake'.
- 4.9 Behaviour policies are effective in promoting excellent behaviour. In the EYFS children respond quickly to instructions and show comprehensive understanding of how to stay safe, particularly in the outdoor classroom. Good links between sections

of the school help children to feel part of the wider school community. For example, pupils in Year 6 made shoe box dolls houses for the Nursery.

- 4.10 Good use of electronic records enables staff to spot patterns. Concerns are followed up quickly. A minority of pupils voiced the view that rewards and sanctions were not fairly given. The inspection found that rewards and praise are frequently and appropriately used to reinforce good behaviour. Where sanctions are used, they are well-documented and proportionate. Effective systems are in place to ensure that the views of pupils are heard and properly considered. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to take on responsibility.
- 4.11 A large majority of parents stated in the pre-inspection questionnaire that their children were happy, safe and well looked after. In the questionnaire, and in interviews with pupils, a small minority of pupils and parents expressed the view that the school does not deal well with bullying. The inspection found that the issues were carefully recorded and promptly followed through to the satisfaction of most pupils and parents.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and has been highly successful in supporting pupils with particular needs.

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

- 4.13 The arrangements to safeguard and promote pupils' health, safety and welfare are sound.
- 4.14 Across the school, arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are in line with the school's aim to nurture every child within a safe, secure environment. Within the EYFS, priority is given to children's welfare, health and safety. Staff are suitably trained in and effectively follow the procedures. Excellent strategies, particularly in the orchard classroom, reinforce safe behaviour and responsibility, allowing children to take managed risks.
- 4.15 Staff, volunteers and governors have enhanced disclosures, but required checks, including references, identity, medical checks, the right to work in the UK and overseas checks, are not always completed before the start of employment, as they should be, and the pertinent information is not recorded accurately in the single central register. In addition, where a disclosure has not been returned prior to the start of employment, a barred list check has not been separately undertaken. These are significant weaknesses in the systems of the school.
- 4.16 The safeguarding policy has been recently updated and is now compliant. All adults working in the school undertake child protection training as part of their induction and at appropriate intervals thereafter. A comprehensive guide to child protection is available and staff understand their responsibilities and the procedures to be followed if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Systems for monitoring and recording welfare concerns are excellent and highly effective relationships exist with local, external, safeguarding and child protection agencies.
- 4.17 The school has effective systems for reducing risks from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are held and detailed records kept. Electrical appliances are tested regularly. Many staff have undertaken appropriate fire safety, safe working practice and first aid training, including paediatric first aid. In most cases, risk associated with different areas and facilities within the school and off-site trips are carefully assessed and appropriate measures put in place to mitigate the risk. The

school does not have a plan in place to manage the risk associated with the water supply; it has responded swiftly to this omission by engaging a suitable external consultant.

- 4.18 Arrangements for ensuring the health of pupils are good, including suitable facilities for pupils who are unwell, and individual care plans for children with long-term medical conditions and/or disabilities. The school has responded well to the recommendation in the previous inspection in this regard.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are completed and stored correctly.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors provide clear direction for the school in support of its aims and have been instrumental in its significant development and improvement in recent years. Their varied skills and experience mean they provide much effective oversight, including of the EYFS. Careful financial management and investment in staff and resources for learning very effectively support the progress and achievements of the pupils. The governors are regular visitors to the school for meetings and events, and consequently have good insight into the workings of the school. They provide good support to the leadership of the school, including stimulus for and involvement in planning for the future. However, governors rely heavily on reports from the leadership of the school and this limits their ability to independently monitor and evaluate the quality of the school and its systems.
- 5.3 The governors undertake an annual review of safeguarding and child protection. Nonetheless, there have been a number of failures in monitoring the school's compliance with regulatory requirements. These include ensuring that policies are kept up to date with statutory guidance, that the required recruitment checks take place prior to employment commencing and that they are accurately recorded in the single central register of appointments, and in the management of some risks. These checks are now taking place and the governors recognise the need to ensure their systems for monitoring and evaluating these important areas of their work are improved. The governors have successfully addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection, including significantly improving the provision for pupils with SEND and of ICT to aid pupils' learning, and closer management of academic and curriculum matters.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.5 Since the previous inspection there have been significant improvements in the school's leadership and management. The current senior leadership has a clear vision for the school and works with great dedication and vigour to ensure that it fulfils its aims and that a strong sense of community is pervasive. The leadership and management have been successful in developing an excellent curriculum and rich extra-curricular provision that enables good academic achievement and excellent personal development of the pupils.
- 5.6 The school development planning is clear and all encompassing. The involvement each year of pupils, parents, staff and governors in the identification of targets and in the evaluation of priorities is a major strength. This collaborative approach has been instrumental in the successful regeneration of the school and the completion of a number of ambitious projects during the past three years, not least of which is the successful transition to co-education. Within the EYFS, monitoring and analysis of assessment, planning and foundation stage profile data is good, and results in effective changes to improve provision and outcomes, for example, developing mathematical skills in response to previous years' experience. The overall quality of

planning throughout the school is good but monitoring and evaluation are not yet systematic and, as a result, some areas of the school are not as successful as they might be.

- 5.7 The school has responded effectively to the recommendations of the previous inspection report. ICT as a teaching tool is now used extensively throughout the school to very good effect and firm plans are in place to further increase pupils' use of ICT through tablet devices. Learning support for pupils with SEND is much enhanced. Links between the junior and senior schools have been significantly strengthened. As a result, a good deal of specialist, co-ordinated teaching is provided across the school and the pupils from each section integrate easily to their mutual benefit. The leadership and management of academic and curriculum matters are much improved since the last inspection. For example, the management information system is used to identify underperforming pupils and implement suitable interventions. Good progress, particularly in regard to outdoor learning, has been made and priorities for the continued development of the EYFS have been identified through the involvement of staff at all levels.
- 5.8 The senior leadership has successfully recruited good quality staff who are enthusiastic practitioners and are strongly committed to the values and future success of the school. Arrangements for the induction and training of new staff in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are effective. Strong support is provided to all staff which they greatly appreciate. Staff in the EYFS value the supervision provided. Regular appraisals identify areas for professional and personal development, and staff are actively encouraged to undertake further qualifications. Staff attend a range of training events, often within the school, but some of these are not always relevant to the needs of the EYFS. Elsewhere throughout the school, good opportunities for professional development are available, often linked to performance management.
- 5.9 Recruitment checks are carried out: however, they are not always completed in advance of employment commencing, nor are accurate and full records of these checks kept. In addition, processes for the assessment and management of some risks are not sufficiently robust. Where failings are pointed out, the senior leadership of the school is quick to respond. Secure procedures for identifying, reporting and implementing repairs and hazard removal, with daily safety checks, based on comprehensive risk assessments, ensure a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment in the EYFS. The school takes the views of parents seriously and handles complaints effectively in accordance with their published procedures, seeking to resolve issues at an early stage whenever possible.
- 5.10 Links with parents, carers and guardians throughout the school are excellent. In the questionnaire parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school, in particular the range of extra-curricular activities available and the quality of care pupils receive. The overwhelming majority of parents said they would recommend the school. In the EYFS, parents also expressed a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the provision, particularly the quality and frequency of feedback on children's progress, and the caring, family atmosphere created by the staff.
- 5.11 Communication with parents is a great strength of the school. Regular newsletters and email updates keep parents well informed about events and activities. Parents feel welcome and comment positively on the quality of care provided by the staff, who know the children extremely well. Constructive relationships with parents are

characterised by the accessibility and visibility of senior managers. As a result, concerns are generally handled quickly and effectively. Parents appreciate and value the written reports and parent consultations that are provided at appropriate intervals throughout the year. Reports, including those at the end of the EYFS, are detailed and, in the best examples, provide clear targets for improvement.

- 5.12 Parents in all sections of the school have extensive opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children, particularly in the junior school where parents often share their skills and expertise with the pupils; for example, by building a wall for Humpty Dumpty. Parents greatly appreciate the opportunities to attend assemblies, concerts and sports events, which they support enthusiastically. Within the EYFS, parents have many opportunities to be involved in children's learning. They access and regularly contribute to learning journals and participate in classroom activities. The active Friends' Association organises social and fundraising events, such as a Christmas Fayre, quiz nights and a summer ball, for parents and their children, raising significant amounts of money. Money raised in this way has been used to fund the purchase of digital projectors for the senior school and main hall, science equipment for the junior school and play equipment for the nursery garden.
- 5.13 Comprehensive information booklets, welcome packs and a regularly updated website ensure that the parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all the required information and have easy access to school policies and other relevant documents.

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