



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CRANMORE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Cranmore Preparatory School

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| Full Name of School | Cranmore Preparatory School | | |
| DfE Number | 936/6519 | | |
| EYFS Number | EY396697 | | |
| Registered Charity Number | 1138636 | | |
| Address | Cranmore Preparatory School Epsom Road West Horsley Leatherhead Surrey KT24 6AT | | |
| Telephone Number | 01483 280340 | | |
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| Email Address | office@cranmoreprep.co.uk | | |
| Head | Mr Michael Connolly | | |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Michael Henderson (Acting) | | |
| Age Range | 2 ½ to 13 | | |
| Total Number of Pupils | 469 | | |
| Gender of Pupils | Boys (Mixed in Nursery) | | |
| Numbers by Age | 2 ½-3 (EYFS): 16 | 5-8: | 114 |
| | 3-5 (EYFS): 78 | 8-13: | 261 |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: | 469 | |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Ms Margaret Kieran | | |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed | | |
| Inspection dates | 12 Mar 2013 to 15 Mar 2013 | | |

PREFACE

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

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors. They 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

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Ms Sue Vale | Reporting Inspector |
| Mrs Krystyna Derkacz | Team Inspector (Assessment Co-ordinator, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Jenny Jones | Team Inspector (Former Headteacher, IAPS school) |
| Mr David Roberts | Team Inspector (Head of Humanities, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Loraine Cavanagh | Team inspector (Former Headteacher, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Ros Ford | Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years |

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| 1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL | 1 |
| 2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL | 3 |
| (a) Main findings | 3 |
| (b) Action points | 4 |
| (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements | 4 |
| (ii) Recommendations for further improvement | 4 |
| 3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS | 5 |
| (a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning | 5 |
| (b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils) | 6 |
| (c) The contribution of teaching | 7 |
| 4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT | 8 |
| (a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils | 8 |
| (b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care | 8 |
| (c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety | 9 |
| 5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 10 |
| (a) The quality of governance | 10 |
| (b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians | 10 |
| 6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE | 12 |
| (a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | 12 |
| (b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being | 12 |
| (c) The leadership and management of the early years provision | 13 |
| (d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision | 13 |

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Cranmore Preparatory School is a Roman Catholic day school for boys from the ages of two-and-a-half to thirteen and girls from two-and-a-half to four. It was founded under the leadership of Canon Peter Freed on its present site in West Horsley, Surrey in 1968. Its aim is to be a school which is committed to the teachings of the Gospel, striving to help all pupils fulfil their potential, by fostering their individual talents and providing for their needs within its caring Christian community. The school is organised in three sections: an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for pupils up to five years old, a Junior Department which incorporates Years 1 to 3, and a Senior Department consisting of Years 4 to 8. It is run as a charitable trust and is administered by a governing body.
- 1.2 Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds with about one-third from Roman Catholic families. The majority live locally, although some come from a wider geographical area. The overall ability profile on entry is above average, and the majority of pupils start in Nursery, and Reception with a few joining later in Year 3 or if spaces occur.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection the school accommodated a total of 469 pupils. In the EYFS there were ten boys and six girls aged under three; 23 boys and five girls attended either part-time or full-time in the Nursery and pre-Nursery and 50 boys attended full-time in Reception. There were 114 pupils in the Junior Department and 261 in the Senior Department. The school has identified 67 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who require some degree of learning support. None of these has a statement of special educational needs. Few pupils are from ethnic minority groups. Of the 29 who come from families that do not have English as their first language (EAL), four receive extra support.

- 1.4 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 tables:

Early Years Foundation Stage

| School | NC name |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Pre-Nursery | Nursery (age 2-3) |
| Nursery | Nursery (age 3-4) |
| Lower Prep | Reception (age 4-5) |

Junior Department

| School | NC name |
|-------------|---------|
| Middle Prep | Year 1 |
| Upper Prep | Year 2 |
| Form 1 | Year 3 |

Senior Department

| School | NC name |
|--------|---------|
| Form 2 | Year 4 |
| Form 3 | Year 5 |
| Form 4 | Year 6 |
| Form 5 | Year 7 |
| Form 6 | Year 8 |

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic achievements is excellent, successfully meeting the aims of the school. Pupils are articulate and mathematically and linguistically highly able. Those with SEND make excellent progress and the few pupils with EAL make similar progress because of the high quality of the support they receive. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to their learning, participating well and with enjoyment in lessons. Their rapid progress is supported by excellent teaching and a highly effective, stimulating curriculum, including an outstanding programme of extra-curricular activities. In some subjects, the methods of the most successful teaching are not consistently replicated. All recommendations from the previous inspection, concerning improved opportunities for independent learning and homework, have been met.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are extremely well-mannered, considerate and respectful of each other; their behaviour is of a very high standard. They are genuinely caring members of their own community and understand their social responsibility to help others who are less fortunate. This is particularly evident in the way the pupils raise large sums of money for charity. Excellent pastoral care is a strong contributory factor to the pupils' extremely good personal development. Relationships between pupils and staff and among the pupils themselves are extremely positive. The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management at all levels are excellent. Exceptional team work by senior leaders in the school ensures that the school runs smoothly and to the benefit of the pupils. The recruitment of staff is carefully undertaken and all staff are trained in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Links with parents and carers 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) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the excellent teaching methods seen in many lessons are employed by all staff to ensure consistency of practice.
2. Build on the good practice already in place between the EYFS and Year 1 to ensure the smooth transfer from the setting to the next stage of education.

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 throughout the school is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils reach high standards in their work, in accordance with the school's aims to foster their individual talents, including in academic, artistic, musical and sporting areas, so that they are fully prepared for their senior schools.
- 3.3 The pupils' achievements are excellent across a broad and academic curriculum. Pupils of all ages articulate their ideas thoughtfully and coherently; they listen attentively and demonstrate a mature understanding and level of reasoning in their responses. They persevere with their tasks and respond positively to the teachers' marking and encouragement, often assessing their own achievement and acting on next steps for improvement. The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are particularly strong and applied well to creative writing and problem solving. Pupils are able to conduct investigations and work to a high standard in the three separate sciences by Year 8. They use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to present their work and handle data and research topics. A high standard of art, showing the pupils' considerable technical skill and creativity is evident in the many excellent displays around the school. Many pupils demonstrate a notable skill in oral and grammatical competence in French. Physical development is actively encouraged and pupils achieve very well across all areas. Pupils with SEND and those new to learning English make excellent progress because their needs are swiftly identified and then effectively supported. Pupils of higher ability also make excellent progress and are challenged in their learning.
- 3.4 The 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 level of attainment, as judged, indicates a high rate of progress in relation to pupils of similar ability, as seen in the scrutiny of books, curriculum interviews with pupils and work seen in lessons in response to demanding teaching. Over the last three years, all Year 8 pupils have secured places at their first choice of senior school and, for the last two years, around one-third have gained all-rounder and academic scholarships and awards in a variety of subject areas, including music and sport. This level of attainment indicates that all pupils, including the most able and those with SEND and EAL, make excellent progress in relation to their ability.
- 3.5 Music, drama and sporting achievements are excellent and a strength of the school. Many pupils reaching high grades in music examinations for their age, and often study more than one instrument. Pupils are very successful at county and national levels in sports such as rugby and skiing, and they perform very well in speaking and drama competitions.
- 3.6 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are bright, lively and interested learners who are full of ideas and enthusiasm and feel safe and confident about expressing themselves, keen to share and communicate their ideas. They apply themselves diligently in lessons and are curious and eager to acquire knowledge. Pupils try hard to improve the presentation and quality of their work, encouraged by their teachers. They behave exceptionally well in lessons throughout the school, so that no time is wasted. Pupils have excellent relationships with one another and with

adults and work readily and happily with others, relishing the opportunities they are given.

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

- 3.7 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The broad curriculum, which covers all the requisite areas of learning, is very effective in meeting the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities as they progress through the school and supporting their high level of achievements. The curriculum covers a wide variety of subjects and strongly supports the schools' aims to enable pupils to learn within a stimulating, challenging and rewarding environment. Time is efficiently and appropriately distributed between different subjects. Pupils in Year 5 and beyond are taught to develop their thinking and reasoning skills which support their preparation for entrance examinations for their next school. In Years 7 and 8 a new, enriched curriculum significantly enhances the Common Entrance syllabus, with the addition of subjects such as philosophy, Greek, current affairs, and Spanish.
- 3.9 Curricular documentation is thorough and monitoring of the curriculum by heads of departments and senior managers is carefully managed. Where appropriate, especially in the classes for younger pupils, cross-curricular links are fostered, for example by using ICT across different subjects. Pupils with SEND and EAL are supported well across the curriculum through work that stimulates their interests in order to help them make maximum progress. This progress is encouraged by parental involvement and support. Gifted and talented pupils in different subjects, notably in sport and music, are recognised, encouraged and supported in the development of their skills.
- 3.10 An excellent range of residential trips and day visits extend the pupils' horizons and knowledge of the world around them; they include a senior chamber choir trip, field trips and visits to places of interest related to topics being taught in the classroom. On a trip to South Africa, a sports team benefitted from visiting the place where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned and also played with children in an orphanage, developing their understanding of those less fortunate than themselves. Many team-building experiences take place as part of the strong personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, which reflects very well the aims and ethos of the school.
- 3.11 In addition to the academic curriculum, the pupils' educational experience is significantly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, thereby fulfilling the school's aim to provide a distinct experience, in which pupils discover their talents by being encouraged to 'have a go'. The school council plays an important part in suggesting activities of special interest to pupils, and all staff lead an activity each week. Pupils are encouraged to participate and most clubs run at full capacity. Age-appropriate clubs, for pupils from Reception to Year 8, range from gardening club to construction club, and film society to touch-typing.
- 3.12 Sport and the creative arts are extremely strong and provide a wealth of activities in which pupils can excel. Outstanding opportunities for developing talents and skills to a very high level in music are available for pupils, through choirs, orchestras and chamber ensembles. Joint musical and dramatic productions for different year groups involve all pupils.

- 3.13 There are excellent links with the local and wider community, including significant fund-raising for regional and national charities, and participation in local events such as gardening competitions and music festivals.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The quality of the teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching is highly effective in enabling pupils to make excellent progress and is very successful in supporting the aims of the school. The comprehensive schedule of assessment, monitoring and target-setting contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the teaching that enables all pupils to make excellent progress. The previous recommendations, concerning allowing pupils more opportunities for independent learning and reviewing the policy for homework, have been met, although there are still a small minority of pupils who feel that the homework set is not appropriate.
- 3.16 Pupils benefit from the enthusiasm, commitment and excellent subject knowledge of their teachers, which fosters their interest at all levels and enhances their learning. In the most successful teaching, work is planned to cater for the differing needs of pupils. This is effective in ensuring all pupils are able to achieve very well. This was demonstrated in a science lesson for the older pupils, where the differing individual needs were fully catered for with various tasks to ensure all pupils were challenged in their learning. In some teaching for younger pupils, there is an over-reliance on worksheets and opportunities for independent learning are reduced thereby, which gives rise to an inconsistency in the quality of the teaching methods used.
- 3.17 The obvious strong relationships that exists between pupils and staff, based on mutual respect and trust, result in a positive and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Teaching creates a supportive and yet challenging environment, encouraging pupils to achieve their potential and make excellent progress. In many lessons, pupils work together in pairs or small groups to achieve success and resources are used well to enhance learning. Teaching in the progress department, which gives extra support for those who need it, effectively supports pupils learning for those with SEND and EAL.
- 3.18 Marking in general is very good with most being thorough and comprehensive; it often provides targets for future progress. This standard and effectiveness is not entirely consistent across subjects. Pupils value the assessment and feedback they receive, and this information is regularly shared amongst teachers to ensure it is used effectively in lesson planning.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 A deep respect and genuine consideration for others is the basis for the whole school community. The responses to the pre-inspection parental and pupil questionnaires highlighted the caring, considerate and supportive ethos of the school. Self-esteem is promoted through many varied team, individual and 'golden rule' awards during assembly. Pupils are confident, articulate and courteous. They work extremely well collaboratively and celebrate each other's achievements. Since the previous inspection, a rigorous PSHE policy has been implemented which permeates school life and results in the strong development of the pupils' spiritual, moral and ethical values. The pupils feel comfortable to express their feelings freely within lessons. They have the confidence to discuss qualities like 'happiness' in an English class. They are emotionally mature for their age.
- 4.3 The pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. Their excellent moral awareness is reflected in their commitment to helping others, especially their support of many charities, including those connected to the Catholic tradition and a respite centre for children, through sponsored events, cake sales and an 'Action' day, where everyone has to entertain for two minutes on stage.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. They are always polite, extremely well mannered, thoughtful and considerate, particularly of visitors, but also of one another. This behaviour is evident throughout the school. Special care is shown to any new pupils, to ensure that they are made to feel part of the community, especially during playtimes. A small minority of older pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaires said that they would like more responsibility. Inspectors found that pupils readily accept responsibility from an early age, for example, taking charge in each house for sports competitions. A democratically elected school council addresses issues emanating from their peers and reports back to them regularly during form periods. In this way pupils develop a good understanding of democratic institutions.
- 4.5 Catholic traditions underpin everyday life. Prayers, masses and assemblies as well as the support from the chaplaincy are reflective and inclusive. Other religions are also celebrated through religious education and PSHE lessons. Displays of relevant festivals, like the recent Chinese New Year, and visits from a speaker about the Holocaust enhance the pupils' excellent cultural awareness. Various language classes, including Mandarin give a further dimension to the pupils' understanding of other cultures as well as a strong awareness of their own culture that they gain from dramatic and musical activities, trips and visits. By the time they leave school, pupils' personal development is excellent.

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

- 4.6 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 The pupils' personal development is supported by excellent pastoral care, based on the teachers' good knowledge of individuals, and caring relationships. Whilst a minority of pupils, in their responses to the questionnaire, felt that teachers were not always fair in giving sanctions, this was not seen during the inspection nor was it

mentioned in interviews with pupils. The recommendation from the previous inspection to strengthen pastoral care has been achieved. Teachers of younger pupils operate an open-door policy before the morning session and at the end of the day, to pass on any important information. Relationships are positive both between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves. Whilst the responses of a small minority of parents to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they believed bullying was not always dealt with well, inspectors found that the rare moments of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with constructively and sympathetically. Excellent measures promote good behaviour and deter bullying. A healthy lifestyle is clearly promoted and supported by the excellent choice of nutritional food available at lunchtimes.

- 4.8 The school has developed the role of the form teacher to incorporate oversight of each pupil's development and the level of support needed. Additional form periods facilitate this support. In addition, the improved homework diary gives good oversight of a pupils' day-to-day progress. Staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school aims. There is a suitable accessibility plan. The whole school community is given very good support by the chaplaincy. A small minority of pupils in their response to the inspection questionnaire said that they did not feel that their opinions were always heard. Inspectors found that the school does a great deal to listen to and act on pupils' views. The school council is formally run by pupils who elect a chair and vice-chair, and minutes are recorded. The council puts forward suggestions of ways which improve the school and school life.

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

- 4.9 The contribution made by the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.10 Safeguarding arrangements are secure and the policy is robust. All staff are up-to-date in their training on child protection. Pupils themselves say that they feel safe and all parents who responded to the parental questionnaire were unanimous in their comments that they believe that their children are safe and very well cared for in school.
- 4.11 Appropriate measures are taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are carried out and are properly recorded in the log book. Health and safety is given a high priority, in line with the school's aims, and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. A governor with responsibility for health and safety regularly visits the school. The school has developed a clear and appropriate health and safety policy with appropriate risk assessments. Pupils who are ill or injured are very well cared for, and the procedures for the administration of medicine are robust. Parents are appropriately informed if their child has had an accident at school.
- 4.12 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and appropriately stored. Families where pupils are absent are contacted on the first day of absence.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance of the school is excellent.
- 5.2 The governors are committed to the school, to securing its aims, developing its Catholic ethos and developing strong foundations for its future development. They have a highly effective oversight of all sections of the school in line with its aims and discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources very well.
- 5.3 Governors are actively involved; they regularly visit the school and are clearly knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses through regular review of policies and examination results. The governors support new initiatives and ensure that the school maintains its excellent provision through their effective involvement and challenging questioning in school development planning. They are highly supportive of the school, including the EYFS, and promote the vision for its future development well. They are very supportive of senior leaders.
- 5.4 The governing body discharges its responsibilities regarding child protection, safeguarding children, safer recruitment and welfare, health and safety appropriately. An annual review of the child protection policy and procedures is undertaken.

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

- 5.5 The leadership and management of the school, including links with parents, are excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management provide clear educational direction, as reflected in the quality of the pupils' education and the standard of their personal development. Self-evaluation is accurate overall. The school development plan has clear and relevant ideas for its future improvement. It is regularly evaluated and clear criteria for its success are included. Recommendations from the previous inspection, concerning reviewing the PSHE curriculum, reviewing the homework policy and reducing some inconsistencies in teaching, have been successfully resolved. Dedicated senior managers with high aspirations for the pupils in their care support the school's aims effectively and ensure its success; team work is exceptional across the school and is a strong feature. The commitment of all staff is highly supportive of the pupils' excellent personal development and academic achievement. The school is extremely well led and managed at all levels, in accordance with the school aims. Policies are regularly reviewed and their implementation is monitored.
- 5.7 The school recruits well qualified staff. All those working with pupils are suitably checked and appropriately trained in safeguarding, welfare and health and safety. A few anomalies in recording checks were rectified during the inspection. Teachers and other staff are deployed appropriately and contribute significantly to the pupils' excellent progress and their welfare. This is particularly pertinent for those pupils identified with SEND, and the very few with EAL.

- 5.8 In the pre-inspection questionnaire the vast majority of parental responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school. Parents agree strongly that their child feels safe and happy at school. Most are very satisfied with the high standards of behaviour and education, and the leadership of the school. Inspection evidence confirms these views.
- 5.9 Parents feel well informed about activities at school. An open door policy ensures that parents can contact the staff via email. The *Weekly Chronicle* and regular information sheets keep parents fully up-to-date with news and forthcoming events and the annual school magazine provides an overview of the school year. The school website provides the required, up-to-date information to parents of both existing and prospective pupils. A number of information evenings are held, including guidance about choosing a senior school and how to hear your child read.
- 5.10 Parents are given many worthwhile opportunities to be involved in activities including helping on trips and attending a wide range of events and social occasions, such as sports matches and concerts. They are encouraged to give talks about their fields of expertise to enhance the curriculum. The parents association is instrumental in supporting the school's fund-raising activities for both the school and for local, national and international charities.
- 5.11 Although a very small minority of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress, the inspection team does not agree with their view. Parents' evenings are held twice a year and these provide an opportunity for parents to discuss the progress of pupils. They receive a detailed report on all subjects at the end of the school year. In the senior school, assessment grades are also given five times a year. In the junior school, parents are invited to 'Come and see' to look at their children's work each term and can see the excellent progress which their children make.
- 5.12 The head and staff are readily available to speak to parents at the start and end of the day or at other times by appointment. On the few occasions where there is a complaint, it is dealt with according to suitable published procedures.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Staff provide interesting and challenging experiences which are effective in promoting the children's language, communication, personal, social and emotional development. Children are keen to learn both indoors and outside, where they engage in purposeful activities relating to their interests. All children are given many opportunities to develop excellent speaking and listening skills.
- 6.2 Planning and assessment practices enable staff to plan the next stages of the children's learning effectively and they have high expectations of all children. They provide a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, which take into account the individual needs of each child. Staff have excellent relationships with the children and encourage them to pursue their own interests, such as a project on the Titanic in Reception. Those with EAL are supported very well.
- 6.3 Parents and carers contribute to their children's learning through the 'WOW' boxes, where they add developmental points about their own child, and make comments in the children's reading records. They provide valuable initial information on entry. In the Pre-Nursery and Nursery, parents meet staff termly to discuss their children's progress and set future targets. Arrangements for reporting progress at two-and-a-half years old are well established. Focussed daily learning in reading, writing and number is an important feature of provision for the older children and helps to prepare them for the next stage of their learning. The pre-inspection questionnaires show that parents are overwhelmingly positive about the setting and the information they receive about their child's progress.

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

- 6.4 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. 'Key persons' across all age groups form very strong relationships with the children so that the children are happy and self-confident. Adults expect good behaviour and support the children's learning enthusiastically. Staff guide them gently in exploring and trying out new activities appropriate to their stage of development. In Pre-Nursery and Nursery, there are many opportunities for the children to interact with one another as they mix together during playtime and afternoon activities. Children have many opportunities to be active and develop a healthy lifestyle. Staff ensure that children develop clear routines such as hand-washing before meals and conduct themselves safely around the school. High priority is given to their health and safety.
- 6.5 The setting offers a bright and lively environment, both indoors and outside, which is very well resourced. The newly-refurbished Reception outside classroom is used effectively to promote many opportunities which enhance the curriculum and promote outdoor learning. The setting realises that the good links already established as children move from the EYFS to Year 1 could be enhanced by implementing a smoother transition process.

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

6.6 Leadership and management of the provision are outstanding. Governors take a great interest in the provision and receive regular feedback from staff. The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance and thorough risk assessments are carried out. Policies are thorough, and regular monitoring of these and of the educational programmes ensure that both are implemented effectively. Careful appointment checks ensure that only suitably qualified adults, who update their training regularly, work with children. Staff performance is good and regularly supervised. Strong partnerships with parents and very good links with external agencies contribute to the comprehensive understanding that adults have of each child. The setting demonstrates excellent capacity for improvement through thorough and vigorous self-assessment as shown in development planning.

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

6.7 The overall quality and standards of the provision are outstanding. All children, including those with EAL, make very good progress from their various starting points by the end of Reception. Even the youngest children make excellent progress in their personal and social development. They share resources, take turns and develop independence to a high level by the end of Reception. They show a high level of respect for each other and their behaviour is exemplary. This contributes to the development of excellent learning habits. The youngest children are able to select what they want to play with, make independent choices and move between activities with confidence. Nursery children can make an alphabet jigsaw, identify some letters and manipulate a mouse to use a simple ICT game. In Reception the children have a secure knowledge of letter sounds and are able to use them in independent written work. Their writing skills develop well and they write short sentences. They use an ICT drawing programme and use the keyboard to write a simple sentence about their picture. They manipulate numbers successfully within twenty and count in 10's to 100. The children sustain concentration well, taking great pride in their work. The children are safeguarded effectively and they feel secure and happy.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

6.8 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.