



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL**

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Bridgewater School

Full Name of School	Bridgewater School
DfE Number	355/6005
Registered Charity Number	1105547
Address	Bridgewater School Drywood Hall Worsley Road Worsley Manchester M28 2WQ UK
Telephone Number	0161 7941463
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Email Address	admin@bwslive.co.uk
Head	Mrs Judy Nairn
Chair of Governors	Mrs Jane Close
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	417
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (196 boys; 221 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 46 5-11: 141 11-18: 230
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 417
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Patrice Bailey
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	03 Feb 2015 to 06 Feb 2015

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 May 2011.

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Dr Alison Primrose	Reporting Inspector
Mr Keith Knight	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mr Anthony Duffield	Team Inspector (Head of Science, ISA school)
Mrs Jacqueline Williams	Team Inspector (Vice Principal, ISA school)
Mr Ian McDonough	Team Inspector (Science Co-ordinator, ISA school)
Mrs Kathleen Silvester	Team Inspector (Former Prep School Head, ISA school)
Mrs Jennifer Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Bridgewater school is a co-educational day school for pupils aged 3 to 18, founded by parents 65 years ago. It is located at Drywood Hall, set in four acres of grounds in the village of Worsley, seven miles north-west of Manchester city centre. The school has purpose built buildings, including recently refurbished common room and study areas for the sixth form. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is an integral part of the preparatory school which also includes Years 1 to 6. It is housed adjacent to the preparatory school with its own outside play area. The senior school comprises Years 7 to 13. They are all managed as one school.
- 1.2 The school is owned by a charitable trust with a board of governors. A new board was appointed in 2012.
- 1.3 The school aims to foster a caring, family environment where pupils' endeavours are celebrated, supporting them to become lifelong learners. The school values the successes and achievements of both individuals and groups from within the community. Through developing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of each pupil, the school aims to promote their understanding of, and sensitivity to, the diverse needs of others.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 417 pupils enrolled at the school, with 141 in the preparatory school and 230 in the senior school, including 31 pupils in the sixth form. There were 46 children enrolled in the EYFS. Pupils are predominantly drawn from the local area, but a significant number travel from a wider area. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds, representing a range of different ethnic and cultural traditions which reflects the diversity of the local population. The majority of the pupils from the preparatory school continue their education in the senior school.
- 1.5 The ability profile in the preparatory school is above the national average, with most pupils having ability that is at least above average. The ability profile of the senior school at Year 7 is above the national average, with most pupils having an ability that is in line with or above the national average. The ability profile at Year 10 is in line with the national average, with a spread of abilities similar to the national distribution. In the sixth form, the ability profile is slightly below the national average for pupils in sixth form education. The school has identified 56 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive guidance and specialist teaching is provided where appropriate. There are 40 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), three of whom receive additional support. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, funded by a local authority.

- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used in the senior school and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the EYFS and the preparatory school, and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Nursery
Reception	Reception

Preparatory School

School	NC name
Prep I	Year 1
Prep II	Year 2
Prep III	Year 3
Prep IV	Year 4
Prep V	Year 5
Prep VI	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils from the EYFS are well educated in relation to the school's aims. The school's family atmosphere and inclusive and tolerant ethos underpins the excellent personal development of pupils. The excellent pastoral care ensures all pupils feel safe, well cared for and known as individuals. Curriculum plans ensure that all pupils benefit from a broad programme of study, and a good range of options is offered for GCSE and A-level examinations. The good well-balanced curriculum, incorporating a wide range of extra-curricular activities and many opportunities for trips and visits outside of school, motivates pupils to achieve their personal best. Teaching is good. The commitment and enthusiasm of the teaching staff support pupils in their academic work and promote high academic standards. The pupils develop into confident young people who are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The majority of pupils leave the school and progress on to the universities of their choice.
- 2.2 The strong and supportive relationships ensure that each pupil is known and valued as an individual and work is usually matched carefully to meet their needs, extending and challenging them appropriately. The EYFS setting has its own dedicated staff and resources. It is an integral part of the whole school, although not yet incorporated within whole school planning. The excellent provision for these children offers a safe, welcoming and exciting learning environment, both in and out of the classroom. However, outdoor learning opportunities are limited by the lack of covered outdoor area. Children transfer from the EYFS setting to Year 1 in the preparatory school, confident and keen to learn.
- 2.3 The senior leaders have a clear vision and work collaboratively with the staff to implement a programme of ongoing development and school improvement. They are strongly supported by good governance. The governors maintain a good oversight of the workings of the whole school. They manage its resources carefully and work closely with the senior leaders to develop the school's strategic plan. They monitor every aspect of the school, including the excellent arrangements for safeguarding, pupil welfare, health and safety. The school is committed to maintaining excellent links with parents, and there are very good systems in place to promote effective home school communication. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and value the open door policy of the school. There is an active parents association which further promotes community spirit and raises significant sums of money to provide additional resources that benefit the learning of the pupils.
- 2.4 In response to the previous inspection the school has improved planning in the EYFS and it has introduced systems to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Strategies have been developed to challenge the most able, although these are not yet fully embedded. The EYFS has not yet made provision for the children to access outdoor learning at all times.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.5 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Promote higher levels of achievement for pupils through further use of assessment data.
2. Provide continuous learning for pupils through strengthening curriculum links across the school.
3. In the EYFS, ensure development plans for the setting are identified explicitly in whole school planning.
4. In the EYFS, ensure the quality of the external provision permits children to work outside in all weathers.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 The pupils of all ages are very well educated in line with the school's aims. The quality and standards of the EYFS are excellent. Children enter Nursery with a very wide range of ability and achievement. They settle quickly and all make rapid progress in their levels of understanding. Nursery children recognise the first letter of their name and most children know basic phonics while some children read simple text confidently. Their fine motor control develops well so that they form recognisable letters. Their speech becomes increasingly clear. In Reception children write phonetically and spell many simple words correctly, beginning to use a firm cursive script. They read and converse with increasing fluency. They perform simple weighing and understand simple comparisons. All children including those with SEND, EAL and the most able are valued as individuals and are fully included in all activities. By the end of Reception most children achieve at the expected level in all areas of learning and some achieve beyond.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects is good, as is the presentation of work and their ability to communicate clearly with confidence. Pupils throughout the school apply their literacy and mathematical skills effectively across the curriculum. In the sixth form, pupils discuss challenging concepts eloquently and ask perceptive questions. Pupils are confident in ICT and many make good use of the school's facilities. Their skills in design and creativity are well developed. More able pupils, those with EAL and SEND all achieve equally well. Many examples of excellent work can be seen in the high quality displays around the school. The majority of sixth formers gain places at the university of their choice.
- 3.4 Through participation in a high quality programme of physical sporting and recreational activities all pupils reach high standards in a wide range of pursuits. In the senior school there is an increasingly high level of achievement in sport with pupils gaining regional, national and international recognition. Pupils achieve success in activities ranging from philosophy to Tae Kwon Do and from poetry to cross country. Many participate in subject based clubs or events as well as the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme.
- 3.5 In the preparatory school, results in national tests for English and mathematics have been above the national average for maintained primary schools. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools. In 2014 both the GCSE and A-level results continued their upward trend in the higher grades, but overall, the A-level results were below the national average for maintained schools. Over the last four years at A-level there has been a wide spread and variation in results.
- 3.6 From data provided by the school, lesson observations, interviews and the scrutiny of work, pupils' progress in the preparatory school is judged as good. The level of attainment at GCSE and the nationally standardised progress data indicate that overall pupils are making good progress relative to the average of pupils of similar ability. The level of attainment at A-level, and the nationally standardised progress data that is available, indicates a trend that the pupils are making appropriate progress relative to the average for pupils with similar ability. In the lessons

observed, pupils' progress was usually good and sometimes excellent. Throughout the school pupils with SEND and EAL make excellent progress as a result of the well targeted personalised class support they receive. This is a particular strength of the school.

- 3.7 The pupils' achievement is strongly supported by their positive attitudes to learning and their excellent behaviour. Many pupils are ready to accept responsibility for much of their own learning and support each other both in and out of the classroom. Pair and group work is common and pupils show a strong co-operative spirit. Overall they are willing pupils who respond to the challenges placed before them.

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

- 3.8 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 Throughout the school the curriculum offers a good range of opportunities for pupils of all abilities and needs, in line with the school's aims. In the EYFS the excellent provision includes an exciting range of activities and a varied daily programme. These are carefully planned to promote a wide range of interests and arouse children's curiosity. The provision is expertly tailored to meet the needs of individual children and often linked to their specific interests. The balance between activities led by staff and those developed by children is well-judged. The programme of activities is enriched by visits to local places of interest and regular explorations in the neighbouring woodland.
- 3.10 The preparatory school curriculum is good. A new curriculum is in place which is being monitored, and regular reviews are evaluating its impact. The quality of the senior school curriculum is good. In Years 7 to 9, pupils study a wide range of subjects including separate sciences for the most able pupils. At GCSE there is a good core curriculum, including at least one modern foreign language. Pupils can also choose three options from a wide range of subjects including drama, art and music. At A level the extensive choice of subjects available is a strength of the school. Parents and pupils are happy with the range of subjects available.
- 3.11 Pupils of all abilities are extremely well supported and readily access the curriculum. Resources such as ICT and the library are used well by some pupils but are not consistently accessed and used by all. Additional support for pupils with SEND or EAL is efficient, well monitored and carefully managed to avoid conflict with subject teaching. More able pupils are identified and are encouraged to aim high with university applications. Pupils are offered opportunities to extend and broaden their education through attendances at conferences and visits to universities.
- 3.12 The school has audited its schemes of work highlighting opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values across the curriculum. Lessons cover topics such as the British justice system, and assemblies are used to learn about democracy and elections, ensuring that pupils receive a balanced understanding of political issues. Topics such as cyber bullying and keeping safe are also incorporated into assembly themes.
- 3.13 A good careers curriculum is provided which, in the sixth form is strongly supported by visitors to the school providing information and guidance on further education, apprenticeships, finance and university courses.
- 3.14 Pupils' experiences are enriched by an extensive range of visits and extra-curricular activities, locally, regionally and internationally. They support key areas of the

curriculum and often provide new experiences for the pupils. These are a great strength of the school.

- 3.15 Strong community links promote the development of pupils' social skills and cultural awareness. Pupils use many local sporting facilities and they have visited the city's central library and experienced live theatre and professional orchestras. Year 11 pupils take part in the National Citizenship Scheme preparing them to be active members of their communities in the future.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.17 In the EYFS staff plan exciting tasks for the children. The recommendation of the previous inspection to note children's next steps in daily planning has been fulfilled. Staff have high expectations. Excellent teaching uses a skilful blend of questions and information which intrigue children and encourage them to think independently. The programmes are carefully planned making good use of a wide variety of interesting and engaging resources. Constant attention is paid to ensuring that all children, including those with SEND, EAL and the most able, are challenged appropriately and participate fully in all the activities. Children work and play outside when it is dry, but there is no shelter against rain which limits the extent to which the recommendation from the previous inspection has been fulfilled. Children thoroughly enjoy weekly opportunities to explore in the neighbouring woodland and visits to local places of interest.
- 3.18 From Year 1, teaching is nearly always good, and in a significant proportion of lessons it is excellent, encouraging pupils to become learners for life in accordance with the school's aims. Teaching is effective in helping pupils to secure a good understanding of individual subjects and it successfully promotes their progress. It generally engages pupils well, develops their intellectual talents and creates an environment in which they enjoy learning. The best lessons are characterised by high expectations of pupils leading to rapid progress in learning. Where there is less challenge progress is more limited. Parents and pupils are highly satisfied with the teaching.
- 3.19 Teaching is well planned using knowledge of pupils' needs to match work to their ability. Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully developed its assessment procedures. Using performance data, pupils' achievements are monitored against national norms and individual learning targets are set. The targets, which enable staff to monitor pupils' progress, are not always sufficiently aspirational for the most able pupils.
- 3.20 Teachers know their pupils well and treat them equally, promoting tolerance and respect, whilst recognising their individual needs. The good rapport between teachers and pupils adds to the strength of the teaching. The most effective teaching has clear objectives and uses open-ended and focused questions to assess the pupils' progress. In interviews, pupils of all ages stated that they are extremely well supported and know that they can seek help and will receive it.
- 3.21 Most work is marked regularly, but marking is of variable quality. In the senior school written comments are frequently affirming but do not always provide constructive comments for further improvement. By contrast, oral feedback is often constructive and focused on individual needs. In the preparatory school, marking is generally thorough and often includes words of encouragement and

praise; in the best examples, teachers give guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work. Pupils commented that teachers' oral feedback helped them to understand how to improve and progress in their work. A small minority of pupils feel homework does not help them learn, though most parents feel that the amount of homework is appropriate for the age of their child.

- 3.22 Teaching generally shows very good levels of subject knowledge and uses a variety of highly successful approaches. It is well-structured to promote progress, and ensures that appropriate resources are readily available to support the pupils' learning. ICT is effectively used by teachers to enhance their lessons though pupils' use is more limited.
- 3.23 Lessons are generally varied, briskly-paced and include revisiting of previous learning, which promotes endeavour amongst the pupils and helps them to learn. Teaching methods employed engender application and encourage clear thought and explanation. A few lessons are less effective when an undue focus on examination criteria constrains the pupils' independent thinking, which hinders progress, particularly that of the most able.
- 3.24 The teaching of pupils with EAL and SEND is excellent, based on a careful assessment of their needs and targeted support. Since the previous inspection, progress has been made to meet the needs of the most able pupils more effectively through curricular provision, including extension activities and tasks, in addition to setting by ability in the senior school. However in a few lessons there is insufficient challenge. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is excellent.

4. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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 The school actively promotes principles that enable the pupils to become tolerant individuals, respectful of all faiths and traditions. This accords fully with the aims of the school. Children in the EYFS are happy, friendly and confident. They form close relationships with the adults who care for them and with each other. Children are encouraged to think of others, demonstrated clearly when a child in Nursery thanked another for her help. Their personal and emotional development is excellent and their behaviour is exemplary.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They are highly articulate, self-aware and personable, showing considerable emotional maturity, and confident to question things to ensure they understand. They are polite and helpful, both to adults and their peers. They show appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, reflecting upon these in lessons and activities. Their enjoyment of life, in all its facets, is clear. A calm atmosphere pervades the school.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is strong. They have a keen sense of right and wrong, clearly respecting school rules and demonstrating an age-appropriate understanding of British law. They display extremely high standards of conduct and moral integrity. They readily engage in debate, discussing moral and ethical issues.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. Highly positive and constructive relationships exist between adults and pupils and between pupils. Adults provide excellent role models for pupils, as do older pupils for the younger ones. Pupils of all ages work well in paired and group learning situations. Their skills of co-operation and team work are strengthened through participation in residential trips. In response to pupil questionnaires, a few pupils felt that they had insufficient opportunities to undertake positions of responsibility. However, inspectors found that many opportunities exist. Pupils readily accept positions of responsibility within the school community, which they discharge conscientiously and reliably. Older pupils help to run clubs for younger pupils, and in the preparatory school older pupils are linked with younger year groups assisting them in various ways.
- 4.6 Pupils develop good political and democratic awareness through participation in election processes within school, and have a growing understanding of democracy and fundamental British values, which are embedded across the curriculum, particularly in the senior school. They reflect upon what it means to be British and have an understanding of public institutions.
- 4.7 Pupils show considerable compassion and concern for those less fortunate than themselves. They work hard and give generously to raise money in support of charities, both in this country and abroad, often taking the initiative in choosing a charity and organising how they will raise funds. Many pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme which provides a further platform for community service.
- 4.8 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They show a clear understanding of, and respect for, the faiths and belief systems of others as well as their own Western values. Pupils work in harmony with their peers, who represent many cultures and

religions. Their appreciation of other cultures is enhanced within the curriculum by visitors to school, visits to different places of worship and trips abroad.

- 4.9 Pupils visit their new classroom in the summer term to ensure that they know their new teachers. Pupils feel well prepared for the next stage of their education and life, as they move through and beyond school. They have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.10 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 The pastoral care provision fully supports the school's aims to encourage pupils to grow and become learners for life in a caring family school environment. In the EYFS provision for children's well-being is excellent. The key persons are skilled, experienced and extremely hard working. Expectations of good behaviour are high and staff are excellent role models for building warm, close relationships. The atmosphere in each room is purposeful and conducive to developing children's concentration and increasing ability to work independently. Staff ensure that children know how to keep safe in school, that physical exercise is good for them and the simple principles of good hygiene. They are also aware that junk food is not good for them.
- 4.12 The staff, supported by efficient pastoral policies and procedures, provide extremely effective support and guidance for pupils. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and staff, are excellent. Staff monitor the well-being of each pupil closely and deal promptly with any concerns as they arise. Daily contact between tutors and pupils and careful pastoral record keeping make a significant contribution to the excellent levels of care provided.
- 4.13 The school is highly effective in promoting excellent behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Pupils' behaviour, effort and achievements are routinely recognised and applauded. A very small minority of pupils felt the school did not deal effectively with bullying if it occurs. In interviews, pupils reported that staff are readily available to provide assistance, and problems are dealt with quickly and effectively. This view was supported by a scrutiny of school records and confirmed by the overwhelming majority of parents, who feel that their children are happy at school.
- 4.14 Pupils are strongly encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise through the wide range of sporting activities available. At lunchtimes a good choice of tasty, nutritious and freshly prepared food is, overall, enjoyed and appreciated by the pupils.
- 4.15 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.16 The school has effective systems to seek and listen to the views of pupils. Although a minority of pupils in questionnaire responses felt that the school does not seek or listen to their views, the inspection judgement is that there are appropriate opportunities for pupils. An effective preparatory school council meets weekly recently securing significant fundraising for school playground equipment. In the senior school pupils appreciate the opportunity to raise issues and share ideas informally, complementing the termly meeting of their school council. Together, they allow elected year group representation throughout the school.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.18 All staff, including EYFS, receive regular training in child protection and the designated safeguarding leads are qualified at the appropriate level. The school works closely with external agencies to provide holistic care for pupils in need or at risk. All staff, including in the EYFS, are fully aware of their responsibilities to promote pupils' welfare and understand the protocols in place to deal with any concerns. In the pre-inspection questionnaire sent out to parents, of those who responded almost all agree that their children feel safe at school. The school's staff recruitment process is in accordance with recent guidelines and follows a clear policy. The excellent systems in place meet minimum legal standards and exceed them.
- 4.19 The school has an excellent understanding of risk and prepares detailed risk assessments for all aspects of school life, including trips and visits. These demonstrate a high level of awareness of health and safety issues and identify actions that will be taken to reduce risk. Systems are in place to reduce the risk of fire, including the routine checks of fire alarms and firefighting equipment. Fire safety training for designated staff is kept up-to-date.
- 4.20 Appropriate provision is made for pupils who are sick or injured. Many of the staff hold first-aid qualifications, including paediatric training, and they receive regular update training. All accidents are recorded and immediate action is taken to rectify any identified hazards. The school's accessibility plan is comprehensive in its coverage, and recent actions and ongoing plans demonstrate the school's commitment to improving access across the site for those with a disability or any other form of special need.
- 4.21 The admission and attendance registers are maintained carefully. New procedures have been developed following the change from paper to electronic systems. These systems have now been adapted to ensure full compliance.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governance arrangements provide effective oversight of the school to ensure it meets its aims for pupils. The governors are aware of the scope of their responsibilities and have established committees to ensure effective monitoring of standards, financial planning, and good investment in staff, learning resources and premises. In the EYFS, the quality of governance is good. A designated governor has been appointed recently who takes an active interest in the setting and governors are aware of what happens in the EYFS.
- 5.3 Governors bring a wide range of professional knowledge and skill to support the school. They have a clear vision and a good understanding of their non-executive role in governance. The school's strategic development plan is drawn up jointly with the school's senior leaders. This comprehensive and ambitious plan encompasses almost all aspects of the school's operations. Its implementation is underpinned by careful financial planning.
- 5.4 Strong relationships have been established between governors and senior managers. The governors' knowledge and understanding of the day-to-day working of the school have been strengthened through the introduction of links with different departments, which are greatly valued by staff and management. Governors give active support for various extra-curricular activities.
- 5.5 The governors' leadership meet regularly with senior leaders to discuss current issues, offering good support and challenge. They have implemented an internal appraisal process for the head incorporating targets linked with the school development plan.
- 5.6 Governors are aware of their responsibility for safeguarding, health and safety throughout the school. All required policies are now fully compliant and made available to parents. The safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed annually. Systems to ensure regular review of whole school policies and their timely publication have been strengthened.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.8 The leadership and management are effective at all levels, providing clear direction for the school and the fulfilment of its aims. This is evident in the high quality of the pupils' personal development and their good all round achievement. The values they promote, which encourage respect for others and a democratic spirit, are embedded in the ethos of the school.
- 5.9 In the EYFS, leadership and management are excellent. All staff ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met in full. Policies are up-to-date and are implemented carefully. Educational programmes are monitored for their success and priorities are set and implemented as fully as possible. Staff receive appropriate

training to improve their expertise and problems are discussed and advice given at regular meetings which all staff value. The lack of a development plan specifically for the EYFS lessens the impact of the importance of the setting as the earliest key stage in the school. Teaching and classroom practice are monitored carefully, and staff work across the setting as a strong, effective team. Leadership ensures that staff are fully trained in safety and health procedures and this, together with understanding the latest welfare requirements ensures that children are safe and secure while in school. The setting has made good progress since the previous inspection.

- 5.10 Whole school policies are implemented consistently, actively promoting the welfare and wellbeing of the pupils who value being known as individuals. Safeguarding matters are taken seriously and the senior leaders ensure that all necessary recruitment checks and procedures are in place and recorded efficiently. New members of staff are fully briefed in health and safety matters and provided with appropriate training and information about the school's safeguarding protocols and procedures. Leaders with academic oversight and those with pastoral responsibilities work extremely well together to ensure that the school meets the individual needs of each pupil.
- 5.11 Subject leaders work well within the preparatory and senior schools, though formal curricular links across the school have not been established. The overall school development plan informs annual development plans, which in turn underpin ongoing development within the school, promoting a culture of continuous improvement.
- 5.12 Effective systems are in place to monitor the impact of new initiatives, either through data analysis or dialogue and discussion. Further systems are in place to support pupils' development, tracking both their academic progress and their behaviour. Senior and middle leaders monitor this data carefully, giving praise and encouragement where it is due, and offering support and guidance as required. Senior leaders review their work critically and engage the staff at every level when considering significant changes. This open style of management is appreciated by staff, who feel well informed and supported. They appreciate being able to talk openly to senior leaders should there be any matter of concern.
- 5.13 Staff continuing professional development is a high priority for the school and all staff benefit from relevant opportunities provided for training. The school leaders strengthen their own professional knowledge and understanding by their active contribution to various local and national educational professional bodies. The school offers good mentoring to support newly qualified teachers, and provides all new staff with effective induction and guidance.
- 5.14 A regular system of appraisal is well established in the senior school. It provides all members of staff with an opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify opportunities for further development. This process is not yet formalised within the preparatory school.
- 5.15 Links between the school and its parents are excellent. In the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed overwhelming support for what the school achieves and for its warm, family atmosphere. They particularly appreciate the high value placed on their children as individuals. The close and warm partnerships nurtured with parents from the EYFS, and the open systems of communication with parents through the preparatory and senior school are strongly

appreciated by parents. They praise the way staff throughout the school are always available to talk and give advice. They are very positive about the staff and value the support they receive from outside agencies when needed.

- 5.16 Communication between school and parents works extremely well. Parents use the hard copy diaries as a useful means of communication and they find electronic communications efficient and easy. A few concerns were expressed about the amount of information parents received regarding their children's progress. The inspection judgement is that parents receive useful details about their children's progress. Regular parents' meetings throughout the year provide formal occasions for parents to discuss their children's progress. These meetings are in addition to detailed, high quality annual reports for children in the EYFS and preparatory school. In the senior school parents receive two full reports a year and half-termly grade cards in all subjects. Results of formal tests in Years 7, 10 and 12 are discussed with parents on an individual basis.
- 5.17 A few parents had concerns about the way the school handles any concerns and the lack of a timely response to questions. Inspectors scrutinised documentation and found that responses are prompt and appropriate. Parents are welcomed into the school to discuss any problem as soon as it arises and thorough procedures are readily available to deal with any complaints should the need occur.
- 5.18 The school provides parents and prospective parents with appropriate information about its policies and procedures on its website. Parents new to the school receive a comprehensive set of documentation. They are encouraged to join the active parents' association which organises numerous events throughout the year which raise money to benefit the school. Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They help on trips and provide valued and loyal support at concerts and sporting events.

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