



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

THE GLEDDINGS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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The Gleddings Preparatory School

Full Name of School	The Gleddings Preparatory School
DfE Number	381/6000
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Telephone Number	01422 354605
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Email Address	admin.thegleddings@btconnect.com
Headmistress/Proprietor	Mrs Jill Wilson
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	195
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (92 boys; 103 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 48 5-11: 147
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Amanda Armstrong
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	05 May 2015 to 08 May 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 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) 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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Louise Harwood	Reporting Inspector
Mr Nicholas Baird	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Grant Whitaker	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, IAPS school)
Mrs Jane Morgan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Gleddings Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged from three to eleven. It is situated on the south side of Halifax in one and a half acres of grounds. The original Victorian house has been extended and adapted over the years to accommodate changes to the curriculum and pupil numbers. The school came into the ownership of the present headmistress, who is the proprietor and sole director, in 1998. Since the previous inspection, a group of external advisors with expertise in a range of educational fields has been appointed to provide support to the headmistress in her proprietorial role.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a safe and caring environment in which pupils of all abilities and needs can develop the confidence to think for themselves, make sensible choices and acquire a life-long positive attitude towards learning. It seeks to regard harmonious relationships, based on mutual trust, respect and tolerance, as integral to its ethos, and to achieve the highest standards of academic education, combined with excellent behaviour.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 195 pupils in the school (92 boys and 103 girls). Of these, 48 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Pupils come from a wide range of economic backgrounds and live within a 20-mile radius of the school. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and others are from a broad mix of other nationalities and cultures, reflecting the local population. Fifteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), two of whom receive focused support for their language development.
- 1.4 The school is not academically selective and many pupils are registered from birth. At entry to the EYFS, the school's overall ability profile is in line with age-related expectations, showing a wide range of abilities. The ability profile of the school rises to above the national average as the pupils move through the school, with few having below average ability. Of the thirty-three pupils identified having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), five require additional support, including one who has a statement of special educational needs.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery
Lower 1	Reception

Years 1 to 6

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 1
Form 11	Year 2
Form 111	Year 3
Lower 1V	Year 4
Middle 1V	Year 5
Upper 1V	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims. It has a strongly nurturing ethos that supports all pupils to develop self-belief and confidence. This enables them to be fully engaged with their learning from an early age and leads to high standards of achievement. By the time they reach Year 6, many pupils are reaching well above the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics. This is due to the excellent teaching that focuses on the needs of the individual. Comprehensive assessment plans effectively for future progress, and high quality marking provides valued personalised feedback. Consequently, all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL and the more able, are fully supported and challenged to extend their learning. The curriculum is rich with opportunities to develop language, sporting and creative skills. Occasionally, especially in the creative curriculum, tasks are overly teacher directed, impeding the scope for pupils' originality. Co-operative learning is a strength of the teaching and activities are well designed so that independent thinking contributes to the group's work.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are ever mindful of the school's three guiding principles and they consistently endeavour to make good choices, be thoughtful and perceive diversity positively. They are developing a well-founded sense of their own identity and are able to express well-considered opinions on issues they have investigated. They trust their own abilities and believe that hard work will secure success. Throughout the school, pastoral care is excellent; behaviour and manners are exemplary and relationships are founded on mutual care, trust and support. Rigorous attention is given to all aspects of welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 Dynamic leadership and governance inspire all members of the community to fulfil the aims of the school. Safeguarding the pupils is given paramount importance, and policy and practice are rigorously reviewed and monitored to ensure that the safety and well-being of the pupils are secure. Leadership has a coherent vision of what is important for the school and its community, and makes changes in line with that vision. It has responded positively to the recommendations of the previous inspection, and teaching and learning have improved as a result. Leaders continually reinforce an atmosphere of collective responsibility and mutual support amongst all members of the school community, resulting in a warm and happy environment. Overwhelming satisfaction with the school's provision and care was expressed by parents and pupils in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires and in discussions with inspectors.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Develop opportunities to give autonomy to pupils, especially in the creative curriculum.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school successfully fulfils its aim for high standards. From the EYFS onwards, pupils' learning skills reach a high level in relation to their age and ability. In the Nursery and Reception, children are enthusiastic and greatly enjoy their learning experiences, making significant progress in relation to a wide range of starting points. This includes children with SEND or EAL. Nursery children focus on recognising and writing initial sounds, and are able to apply these skills well to reading simple words and identifying the names of their peers. The more able children in Reception read with fluency and understanding, and they confidently use their phonic knowledge to tackle new words. Children have secure pencil grips and form letters correctly. They are keen to write as part of their self-chosen activities, such as when compiling shopping lists, noting orders in the fictional café and writing menus. The youngest children are familiar with numbers to ten and beyond, and this is extended in Reception to the confident manipulation of larger numbers and the secure recognition of coin values. All children show a readiness to concentrate and persevere, as well as an eagerness to join in and to shape activities through their own contributions.
- 3.3 Standards of handwriting and presentation are exceptional throughout the school, exemplifying the care and thought all pupils bring to their work. Writing at all levels is characterised by the correct use of grammar and punctuation. As the pupils mature, they become adept at using metaphors and similes, as well as adjectives and adverbs, to create writing of depth and interest. Standards of reading are excellent and all pupils are eager to discover new information. Older pupils demonstrate an advanced level of mathematical vocabulary and apply it correctly. Their well-developed skills of estimation, prediction and analysis enable them to draw conclusions that consider broader issues and to make new connections. This was evident in a range of lessons observed, including science, English and the humanities. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are strong and pupils use them routinely to enhance their studies. Performance in physical activities is of a high standard, with pupils demonstrating confident control, speed and co-ordination. Work in art shows excellent technique.
- 3.4 High standards of singing were observed throughout the inspection week and many pupils learn a musical instrument, achieving merits and distinctions in music examinations. The orchestra, ensembles and choirs perform to a good standard. Achievements in sport and public speaking denote enthusiastic participation in a wide range of activities and competitions, and peaks of excellence for many individuals. These include representation at regional level in cricket, athletics and cross-country, and national success in language and public speaking competitions.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at the age of 11 are exceptional in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. Additional inspection evidence confirms this judgement. All pupils, including those with SEND or EAL and the most able, achieve highly due to the rigorous and robust system of tracking, monitoring and support, particularly in English and mathematics. On leaving school, most pupils proceed to highly selective maintained grammar schools and independent day schools, some

gaining scholarships. This level of attainment indicates that pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND or EAL, make an excellent rate of progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. All pupils and parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed strong appreciation for this notable rate of progress.

- 3.6 The pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. While appreciating the significance of hard work and practice as a means of achieving personal goals, pupils view learning as a collaborative effort. They enjoy working in teams and with partners, and gain considerable satisfaction from the success of joint enterprises. The high levels of participation and enthusiasm indicate that pupils enjoy their work and they almost always display considerable application and perseverance. They are determined to succeed.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

- 3.8 In the EYFS, the educational programmes are rigorously planned to provide a wide range of exciting learning opportunities that focus on the three prime areas of learning when the children first join the school, and expand to include a broad balance of activities as the children progress through the setting. Topics are chosen to encourage and enable individuals and groups to engage in innovative activities where evaluation has indicated that this would lead to improvement. Consequently, the majority of children are achieving at least the expected levels of attainment by the end of Reception, with some exceeding them.

- 3.9 Carefully annotated individualised educational plans and an excellent range of resources strongly support pupils with SEND or EAL. This ensures that all pupils have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that caters well for their individual needs and abilities and enriches their learning. This enrichment includes Mandarin from Year 1, French from Year 2 and Latin in Year 6. Ceramics, cookery and textiles develop pupils' practical skills and techniques. The presence of drama, art and music as both curricular and extra-curricular activities underlines the importance given to the creative arts. Information and communication technology is embedded throughout the curriculum, and the introduction of a computer literacy certification programme from Year 1 has further enhanced this provision. Religious education and personal, social, health and economic education are taught holistically and the scheme is, in many ways, the cornerstone of the curriculum. It underpins the school's continual counsel to choose, think and reflect that diversity is positive, and includes age-appropriate training on e-safety. The scheme provides a definite and meaningful guide to learning in all other subject areas and embodies many of the school's aims. In further support of the aim to maximise every learning opportunity, the curriculum includes lessons to develop thinking and memory skills. Games and physical education lessons provide well for all levels of ability. Regular events known as 'wow days' serve to enrich the curriculum further and extend learning, especially for the more able. Recent events have focused on art, science, mathematics and history. Careful curriculum planning and review result directly in highly successful learning and in the development of pupils' confidence, skills and ability to contribute. Equal importance is given to considering conflicting views and opinions in all topics covered in both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

- 3.10 The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. They are taught by a team of specialist teachers, coaches and volunteers with expert knowledge. Skills are developed and interest is excited through involvement in

activities ranging from gardening and pottery to taekwondo and computer-game writing. The clubs and activities are popular and well attended. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the range of subjects on offer is appropriate and that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. The pupils' responses mirror these views. In interviews with inspectors pupils expressed immense satisfaction with the clubs on offer, including a comment that they are "spoilt for choice".

- 3.11 Community based activities are used effectively to develop pupils' self-esteem, meet individual and group needs, and prepare the pupils for their future roles in society. They also enable pupils to make positive contributions to the experiences of other people. Strong community involvement includes active participation in enterprise initiatives to support a children's hospice, a school for children with severe disabilities and a local food and support drop-in centre. Children throughout the district join Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to develop their creative writing and poetry skills at able writers' events. Classes have well-sustained links with groups elsewhere in the UK or abroad. For example, the partnership with a French school affords the regular exchange of letters and news. Older pupils are involved in the sponsorship of a child in Sudan, which complements their participation in projects for bringing safe water and sanitation to communities affected by adversity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.12 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.13 The highly experienced and dedicated EYFS teaching team is committed to ensuring that all children have the best possible start to their education. Their deep understanding of how young children learn and develop enables them to plan enjoyable experiences that include imaginative resources. This ensures that children are fully involved. Equality and diversity are wholly embraced by the staff; they are highly effective in ensuring that all children are well integrated and that their widely ranging abilities are appropriately supported. Adults observe individuals closely, track their progress and use the information to plan their future progress.
- 3.14 From Year 1, teaching is consistent and highly effective; it contributes strongly to the pupils' excellent achievements. Staff understand and develop pupils' motivation and emotions. They build on these and are successful in achieving their pupils' sustained attention and commitment to successful learning. Marking and assessment are constructive and rigorous. This meets a recommendation from the previous inspection, to extend the high quality of marking in literacy and numeracy to all subjects. The pupils' effort and application are valued by staff, who provide personalised feedback as well as clear targets and goals. In interviews with inspectors, pupils remarked that they find the marking of their work to be extremely helpful and that teachers' comments are both encouraging and informative. The size of groups is planned to meet the pupils' needs. They deliver learning personally to individual pupils and groups according to their needs. Partner teachers offer expert knowledge to enhance learning experiences, and teaching assistants are deployed effectively. Consequently, all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL and the more able, are fully supported and challenged to extend their learning.
- 3.15 Lessons are well structured and are founded on the teachers' deep subject knowledge. New facts and information are related to prior learning, and ideas are linked and contextualised. Teachers set clearly defined tasks and pupils work at a brisk pace; time is used efficiently. Literacy and numeracy are taught in structured

ways; pupils master basic concepts before moving on to the next step so that they develop confidence in their abilities. Lessons frequently make effective use of co-operative learning and discussion with partners. These activities are well designed to promote independent thinking within group work. Pupils build on each other's contributions to reach a common understanding, while respecting minority viewpoints. This was clearly demonstrated in a discussion on the suffragette movement by older pupils, and in another by younger pupils on equality of access to a children's playground. This meets a recommendation from the previous inspection for pupils to participate more in open-ended discussion.

- 3.16 Teachers encourage pupils to illustrate or explain information, ideas, processes and skills to the adults in the classroom and to their peers. This actively promotes the school's aim to make every pupil a learner in every lesson. The judicious use of self- and peer assessment also maintains the focus on learning. Contexts for learning are challenging and enjoyable, and include creative and investigative activities. Pupils engage confidently in these activities. Occasionally, especially in the creative curriculum, tasks do not give pupils the freedom to choose, or take responsibility for the decision making surrounding the completion of a task. This limits the scope for originality of creative achievements.
- 3.17 A wealth of resources, including ICT, support the teaching and learning and sustain the pupils' interest and enthusiasm in lessons. Productive relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that lessons are enjoyable and that behaviour is exemplary. The requirements set out in any statements of special educational needs are followed meticulously, and vigilant monitoring by the learning support team enables pupils to access their learning appropriately and make excellent progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is effective in meeting its aims by actively creating an environment that ensures excellent personal development of the pupils within a strong sense of community and shared values. Pupils are proud of their learning, attainment and achievements. They express confidence that they can achieve their potential if they work hard and aim high. In the EYFS, children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. They show considerable maturity in their behaviour and in their ability to make good choices and to respect each other. Empathy and the ability to compromise are acquired rapidly. This is exemplified by the children's readiness to share and take turns. All pupils are very well prepared for the transition to the next stage of their education.
- 4.3 The pupils show a deep awareness of intangible influences on their learning and development, such as perseverance, the joy of collaboration and team spirit. They listen intently to stories from different faiths and discuss their meanings with mature reference to the school's guiding principles. Through participation in whole-school assemblies, pupils thoughtfully consider the values of caring societies, which they endeavour to emulate in their own interactions. They are moved by stories of good triumphing over evil and reassured by the knowledge of their own innate ability to make a difference. Consequently, they show high self-esteem and hold enthusiastic views about their role in the school community. They frequently state their belief that happiness comes from making others happy.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent. They demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong. As a result of their readiness to follow the school's guiding code of behaviour, their courtesy and manners are exemplary. Older pupils extend their moral understanding further; they hold clearly formed opinions on lawfulness in the wider community, and debate conflicts of interest with an awareness of the moral dilemmas these can present to individuals and to groups. From an early age, pupils appreciate that every chosen action has a consequence. They thereby begin to acquire an understanding of the necessity for the over-arching protection of the civil and criminal law of England.
- 4.5 Pupils display mature social development. They show a natural inclination to help those in need. For example, they collect food for the homeless every week and raise money from enterprise stalls for street children in Tanzania. They also sponsor an endangered animal species. During the inspection week all pupils experienced the democratic process by holding a ballot to choose a different animal to sponsor. They gave well-informed reasons for their choices and acknowledged their difficulty in making a decision. Pupils are elected to many posts of responsibility by their peer groups, such as head boys and girls and school council representatives. They take these roles and responsibilities seriously, and appreciate that by fulfilling them successfully they are helping the school community to run smoothly and effectively. They make a connection between their own elected office and that of public officials, such as mayors, magistrates and prime ministers, and know that they are holding the trust of others.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural awareness is well developed. The themes of tolerance and respect are incorporated into the school's ethos, and pupils therefore develop a

positive appreciation of equality, social justice and diversity in British and other Western culture. They are inquisitive and respectful towards people from different backgrounds and embrace opportunities to explore their differences. School trips to cultural centres and museums extend their breadth of cultural understanding. They are proud of their acquisition of additional languages and enjoy performing plays in French.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 In line with its aims to encourage harmonious relationships, the school enjoys an environment of nurturing support, kindness, humanity and care.
- 4.9 Strong relationships between pupils and adults exist throughout the school, to the benefit of all concerned. In the EYFS, children form trusting bonds with all the adults who care for them and this is extended by the effective use of the key person system. All staff exemplify high expectations for desired behaviour and pupils respond readily to this positive reinforcement. The success of the 'buddy system', which teams older pupils with the very youngest, demonstrates the care and support shown by all members of the school community towards each other.
- 4.10 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in discussion, pupils highlighted the level of fairness and approachability of their teachers and felt confident that if they had a concern it would be swiftly resolved. A healthy lifestyle is firmly encouraged; lunches are nutritious, well balanced and appetising. A highly valued and popular extra-curricular physical education programme underpins the pupils' understanding of the value of regular exercise.
- 4.11 The school successfully promotes high standards of behaviour and guards against harassment and bullying. Pupils report that bullying is rare and that staff deal rapidly and effectively with any disagreements. Positive behaviour is promoted well by the rewards system, through which staff acknowledge and value the pupils' contributions, effort and kindness. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents particularly expressed that their children feel happy and safe in school, and appreciation of the high standards of behaviour.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND. Members of the school council work conscientiously for the good of their peers and are fully supported in this by the school leadership. As a result, pupils are able to make a difference to many aspects of school life.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 The school's safeguarding arrangements make a significant contribution to the feeling of security that the pupils enjoy and comment positively upon. Pupils, as well as staff, register a keen awareness of welfare, health and safety, and are encouraged to make the right choices to stay safe and to appreciate collective responsibility for a safe environment.
- 4.15 All staff, including those in the EYFS, are aware of the safeguarding policy and their role within it. Appropriate training in child protection is undertaken, and diligent safeguarding leaders monitor all aspects of policy and practice carefully. Procedures

have due regard to national and local requirements. Excellent relationships with external agencies and health and safety providers are maintained.

- 4.16 Since the previous inspection, external experts have been appointed to oversee health and safety arrangements, resulting in an even greater awareness of such matters. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards, and systems are regularly reviewed. Records of staff training and safety procedures are meticulously kept and evaluated carefully. In the EYFS, all aspects of safety are firmly embedded and staff are alert to any potential risk.
- 4.17 A working group to ensure compliance with statutory requirements meets regularly to oversee and monitor all health and safety practice. Detailed minutes of these meetings are taken, and they confirm the effectiveness of this group and the paramount importance attached to the welfare, health and safety of the whole school community. The school has effective measures to provide for pupils who are ill, injured or have SEND. A high proportion of staff have appropriate training in first aid, and the medical room provides comfortable and well-appointed accommodation, with secure storage of medication. Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and are fully compliant with regulations.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Supported by considerable educational experience, and in her dual role in governance and leadership, the proprietor successfully discharges her responsibility for maintaining high educational standards and fulfilling the school's aims. Rigorous scrutiny and monitoring of all aspects of the school's provision, including the EYFS, impact directly on the excellent achievements and personal development of all the pupils. Astute financial planning ensures that the school is exceptionally well resourced, including the provision of experienced and well-qualified staff. The accommodation and grounds are maintained to a high standard and are constantly improved.
- 5.3 Within the proprietor's highly effective involvement, she communicates to staff, pupils and parents that the school's values are evident in small-scale daily actions, as well as strategic vision. A carefully chosen group of external consultants works with her to oversee statutory compliance and to identify areas for improvement. Their substantial collective knowledge and experience provide effective stimulus for growth and challenge. They ensure that staff suitability is appropriately checked and that the single central register of appointments is rigorously maintained.
- 5.4 Through a comprehensive programme of policy review, the proprietor fulfils her statutory responsibilities successfully. There is a detailed approach to risk assessment and the close scrutiny of welfare, health and safety. The annual review of safeguarding is undertaken, during which all aspects of policy and practice are comprehensively considered.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 Leaders at all levels within the school take a collaborative approach. They draw on the collective knowledge, experience and personal interests of staff and on the views of pupils and parents. They reinforce a democratic culture where pupils and staff feel able and confident to take lead roles within and beyond the classroom. The partner teaching model and the teaching teams in English and mathematics, for example, provide training and support which promote the conditions through which the school sustains excellence. Everyone learns with and from others, prompting reflection and change. This is in full accordance with the school's aims and its ethos of having respect for others.
- 5.7 The leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent. Senior staff carefully monitor the educational programmes and the effectiveness of their delivery. Teachers and assistants are well supported in their professional development through an established system of appraisal, regular supervisory meetings and attendance at internal and outside training courses. Training needs and outcomes are directly linked to the comprehensive department development plan. This plan exhibits a firm commitment to continuous improvement and an ambition to provide the best possible outcomes for all children. Reflective practice is a marked feature of

the setting; through this all staff have a voice and a significant role in identifying areas for future focus. The setting has successfully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection by incorporating specific learning targets for individuals into short-term planning and by facilitating easier access between the indoor and outdoor learning environments for the Nursery.

- 5.8 School policies are implemented rigorously, promoting pupils' safety and happiness. Throughout the school, robust systems ensure that the safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Staff are appropriately trained in their roles with regard to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The school's leadership ensures that members of staff and volunteers are suitably checked and that the checks are appropriately recorded. Staff are carefully appointed, with a sharp focus on their expertise in subject areas in order to raise standards and challenge pupils to succeed in all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular programmes. A strong team spirit pervades the school, with a sense that all members of its community are integral to its smooth running. This ensures that the pupils' daily experience is as nurturing and formative as possible. The dedication of staff is absolute.
- 5.9 Management at all levels is highly effective. Subject leaders evaluate and make the best use of information about the quality of teaching and learning in order to ensure that pupils receive optimal support and challenge. Meticulous analysis of planning, learning and assessment drives improvement in standards. Managers consistently maintain an awareness of the inter-connection between all the school's activities and the improvement of learning and outcomes for pupils.
- 5.10 The leadership's vision for the school's future is challenging and ongoing. It is shaped by an informed awareness of current educational thinking and legislation, and involves recurring reflection and debate amongst all members of the school community. School development is a key priority, and needs are well identified and successfully achieved. A comprehensive development plan addresses all areas of the curriculum and each stage is cross-referenced to the school's aims. The needs of the pupils in the entire process are paramount, and their excellent standards of work and personal development demonstrate its success.
- 5.11 The school has excellent links with parents, including the EYFS. Leadership continually reinforces an atmosphere of collective responsibility and mutual support, and this includes the whole family. Parents' responses to pre-inspection questionnaires overwhelmingly endorsed this approach. They recognise and value the warm, welcoming, family atmosphere within the school. Parents are confident that staff know their children well, and they appreciate the open channels of communication and the ready availability of all staff, including leaders and managers, to discuss any concerns or queries they may have. Should a parent have a complaint, it is handled with care and in accordance with the school's published policy; this has not needed to be used recently. All parents who responded to the questionnaire would recommend the school to another parent.
- 5.12 Before pupils join the school, they and their parents have many opportunities to visit and have access to necessary information. The school's website and handbook are other valuable sources of relevant material. Parents are kept well informed about news and activities through the school's weekly blog, and this also provides an effective platform for sharing pupils' special achievements and examples of their work. Parents are warmly welcomed to a variety of school events that include weekly assemblies, sports days and concerts. Some parents are members of the school choir, and others are learning to play a musical instrument at the school and play in

its orchestra. A very small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed a wish to be more involved in school activities. Inspectors found the existing opportunities to be well balanced and that the school tries hard to ensure that parents are included in the daily experiences of the pupils. For example, the weekly assembly to which parents are invited is recorded and made available for absent parents to view.

- 5.13 Parents receive full written progress reports half-way through the school year. These are highly informative and contain comments on achievements, with specific targets for further improvement. At the end of the year, parents receive reports that summarise their children's progress, with grades given for effort and achievement and comments on literacy and numeracy. Parents have the opportunity to discuss reports with staff and to add their own comments, thus ensuring an ongoing dialogue about their children's work and progress. Annual information evenings prepare parents and pupils for the transition between phases and classes. Leadership holds exhaustive discussions with parents over pupils' move to secondary education. Workshops and outside speakers provide further opportunities for parents to support their children's learning and educational experience.

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