



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

CLEVELANDS DAY PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Cleavelands Day Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Cleavelands Day Preparatory School
DfE Number	350/6011
Address	Cleavelands Day Preparatory School 425 Chorley New Road Bolton Lancashire BL1 5DH
Telephone Number	01204 843898
Fax Number	01204 848007
Email Address	secretary@cleavelandsprepschool.co.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Parlane
Chair of Governors	Mr Ali Khan
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	133
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (83 boys; 50 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 33 5-11: 100
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Michelle Latham
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	12 May 2015 to 15 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 June 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 chair of governors and one other representative of the board of directors, 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 Juliet Jaggs	Reporting Inspector
Mr Neil Gabriel	Team Inspector (Head, HMC/IAPS school)
Mrs Kia Jackson	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Clevelands Day Preparatory School aims for its pupils to enjoy learning. It intends to provide a breadth of high quality experiences that enable pupils to learn to understand themselves, to develop their potential and so to make well-informed choices about the next step in their education. It also aims to promote positive relationships between the school and home as well as in the classroom. The school intends for links with the community to give pupils knowledge of different cultures and the world around them. It seeks to create a health conscious and secure environment that promotes the pupils' self-discipline and acceptable behaviour.
- 1.2 The school was founded as a proprietorial school in 1962, a short distance from the current site on the western fringes of Bolton. It moved to its current location in 2001. In 2013, the current proprietorial company purchased the school from its previous proprietor. The school is one of a group of six preparatory schools in the northern branch of the organisation. A board of four directors takes responsibility for the governance of the school; it leads aspects relating to operations, finance, marketing and education.
- 1.3 The school educates 133 pupils, 33 of whom are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Eight of these children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. There are 83 boys and 50 girls. Most pupils are educated in the main building where there is one class in each age group; the Nursery is housed in a former stable block. A few pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or learn English as an additional language (EAL). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The ability profile of pupils is in line with the national average. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds; about half are from minority ethnic groups. The main point of admission is into the Reception class.
- 1.4 The leadership team has been restructured since the previous inspection. Identified senior leaders now take responsibility for different key educational stages and for the arrangements for pupils with SEND. The school grounds have been developed to include a woodland area, and a local conservation trust now collaborates with the school to promote specialist training in wildlife care.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in meeting its aim to develop pupils' potential. Children in the EYFS make an excellent start, with some of them exceeding the expected levels of development by the time they leave Reception. The setting responded well to the recommendations of the previous inspection. Improvements in planning mean that children's next steps in learning are more clearly identified, and with more routine arrangements for learning outdoors, children make excellent progress.
- 2.2 Pupils all develop a range of skills and their achievement is good. An emphasis on examination preparation for older pupils enables the vast majority to achieve places at selective independent senior schools. The curriculum is good; from Year 1 onwards it has been successfully reviewed in accordance with the recommendation of the previous inspection. Planned experiences now provide pupils with more opportunities to learn through investigation, although this is more effective in the lower part of the school. The range of extra-curricular activities is good and in their questionnaire responses and interviews, pupils were extremely positive about their experiences at school. Teaching is good because of the way in which teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan logical sequences that promote learning. Assessment strategies are not always as effective in identifying when pupils are ready to progress from one of these tasks to the next. This means that the most able in particular wait too long in lessons for work that offers a suitable, higher level of challenge. Inspection evidence supports the views of a small minority of parents who raised this concern in their questionnaire responses.
- 2.3 Pupils are thoughtful and courteous and their personal development is good, but some pupils lack opportunities to learn fully about their heritage because of inconsistencies in the way the new curriculum is being implemented. The school provides excellent levels of pastoral care, and provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Parents' responses to the questionnaire indicated that they are very satisfied with the way the school looks after their children, but a few expressed concerns about bullying. Inspection evidence does not support this view; bullying is extremely rare and the school deals with it quickly and effectively. This view is shared by pupils. The school has recently enhanced arrangements for pupils to express their views; this has begun to address the concern of a minority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire.
- 2.4 Leadership has introduced effective initiatives since the previous inspection, including greater levels of monitoring. Information gathered during these activities has prompted improvements in teaching which have resulted in an increase in the pupils' attainment in reading. The level of analysis is variable and on occasion areas for development are not readily identified. Excellent partnerships enable the school to make good use of the woodland area in the grounds, and any pupils with speech and language difficulties receive highly effective support. Governance promotes the school's caring ethos effectively. Resources have also been managed well, resulting in investment in the school's facilities. Governors focus on identifying the specific developments necessary to enhance pupils' personal development but their focus on pupils' achievement is not as constructive; their support for the educational direction of the school is sound.

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. Ensure that leadership at all levels analyses fully the information gathered during monitoring activities so that required developments can be identified more easily.
2. Ensure that governance and leadership collaborate to improve the impact of the educational provision in achieving more ambitious outcomes for pupils.
3. Ensure that planning and assessment enable teaching to respond more effectively when pupils, especially the most able, are ready to progress during lessons.

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 good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Their positive attitudes to learning assist them in achieving their potential. All children in the EYFS, including those with EAL or SEND, make excellent progress from their starting points. They use their phonic skills well and their mathematical knowledge develops quickly. They reason well to make sensible predictions and their artistic skills are well developed. Children enjoy investigating their surroundings and they play imaginatively, adopting a variety of roles.
- 3.3 Pupils throughout the school are articulate and they speak well on a variety of topics. They listen carefully to one another's ideas and they read fluently. Pupils have a good understanding of grammatical structures and of how to incorporate these in order to write varied sentences, although they do not apply this knowledge consistently when they write longer prose. Their numeracy skills are very good and they apply them effectively in other curriculum areas. For example, younger pupils were able to use their knowledge of angles and direct a programmable toy to a pre-determined location.
- 3.4 Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of various techniques to produce colourful artwork and interesting designs. Reasoning skills are good, particularly when pupils are drawn into a debate. The level of participation in sport considerably increases pupils' physical skills. Pupils are successful in activities, including local football, rugby, cross-county, gymnastics and netball tournaments. They develop good communication skills and self-confidence in drama; several attain good standards in speech and drama examinations, including those who have overcome speech and language difficulties. Individual pupils play a good range of musical instruments, with some notable successes in examinations. Pupils sing skilfully and enthusiastically when they perform together.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against a fixed national norm, but on the evidence available is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils study a wide-ranging curriculum that is generally well applied and, on leaving school, most proceed to selective independent senior schools. A few pupils are awarded scholarships. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good rates of progress in relation to pupils of similar ages and abilities.
- 3.6 Pupils make suitable progress, as indicated by lesson observations, work produced and curriculum interviews. Boys and girls make similar progress and pupils with EAL make good progress because of the way the school encourages them to use their home language as they learn. Pupils with SEND make good progress because staff work closely with learning support specialists to provide effective guidance. The more able pupils do not make the same consistently good progress as their peers because the level of challenge they receive is not sufficiently rigorous.
- 3.7 The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They approach tasks with enthusiasm and concentrate extremely well. They apply themselves in lessons and persevere when the task is challenging. Pupils work very well together and have the same level of interest and determination when working individually. The presentation of their work

is of a consistently high quality. Occasionally, pupils follow instructions to complete tasks accurately when they do not fully understand the rationale behind the task and they avoid asking for clarification.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The EYFS curriculum is excellent in meeting the needs of the range of the children who attend. An effective partnership with an external speech therapist means that staff are well able to promote the language development for the few children with EAL or SEND who need this level of support. Recommendations made at the time of the previous inspection regarding improvements to the curriculum have been implemented, within the constraints of the school's listed building status. Regular use is made of the wide range of environments available and the children have free-flow access to the outdoors for part of every day.
- 3.10 The school meets its aims to provide a curriculum that covers all the requisite areas of learning, with added breadth and depth provided by specialist teaching. For example, language provision is good and French is now taught throughout the school, including to children in the EYFS. In addition, pupils in the main part of the school enjoy a Spanish club. The introduction of 'challenge zones' in each classroom, which include activities that encourage pupils to use their knowledge in different ways, has added depth to the curriculum. The more able are unable to take full advantage of these because they spend too long completing simpler, repetitive exercises successfully.
- 3.11 Following a recommendation made at the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum has been developed as a co-ordinated programme of experiences that promotes a good range of skills and enables pupils to use these in different ways. Planning is still somewhat general, which leads to inconsistent interpretation. The curriculum is more creative in the lower half of the school and there is some repetition of activities in the following years. The woodland area in the school grounds is an extremely effective feature, enhanced by the excellent partnership with the local conservation trust. It gives pupils frequent opportunities to learn about the habitats and creatures in and around a pond. The emphasis on examination preparation for older pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 means that their curriculum is not enhanced to the same degree, although these pupils are well prepared for entrance to senior school.
- 3.12 Recent improvements to the provision for pupils with SEND have led to a more methodical approach, ensuring that these pupils receive the most appropriate support. Individual education plans are prepared for all pupils with SEND. The plans are used effectively to ensure that staff are well aware of the needs of these pupils and appropriate extra help is offered within the classroom. The school also identifies pupils in temporary difficulty and retains the flexibility to support them individually when they need extra help. Further developments are underway to ensure that the school takes advantage of the new assessment system in monitoring the impact of these arrangements more objectively.
- 3.13 The school fulfils its motto, 'Work hard, play hard', by providing pupils with a varied extra-curricular programme that motivates their involvement. This includes activities such as baking, Irish dancing and an 'eco' club. High expectations in music mean that pupils perform well in the choir and the orchestra. Several pupils are prepared

for external music and speech and drama examinations, and pupils compete in a good range of sports fixtures.

- 3.14 The school has effective links with the local community and makes good use of local facilities in visits that complement learning in the classroom. These include outings to a recycling plant, to the seaside and to meet the local mayor. Visitors to the school support learning in other ways and parents are often invited to talk to pupils about their knowledge and experiences. The curriculum provides pupils with experience in adventurous activities, such as during routine residential trips to an outdoor centre. Links with local schools enable pupils to enjoy a biennial ski trip.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 Teaching in the EYFS inspires an enthusiasm for learning, in accordance with the school's aims. Resources are used imaginatively to create stimulating activities, which encourage children to explore the excellent range of outdoor environments. High expectations enable them to accept challenges readily. For example, children in Reception were keen to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to decode the word 'metamorphosis' successfully. Planning and classroom practice take careful account of each child's individual abilities, interests and progress, identifying the next steps of their learning. This enables children to continually make good progress in all areas of learning.
- 3.17 Teaching throughout the school demonstrates good subject knowledge, and new ideas are presented to pupils in interesting ways. Discussions are often engaging because teaching makes good use of the pupils' ideas to help them understand these new concepts. For example, younger pupils made good progress learning about capacity when encouraged to reflect on their early predictions and make them more accurate.
- 3.18 The school has successfully met the recommendation made at the time of the previous inspection for pupils to be given more opportunities to engage in investigative work. Some lessons are extremely well organised to accommodate a variety of activities at the same time. Most teaching uses assessment of the pupils' progress to plan accurately, and to ensure that pupils with different levels of attainment begin tasks at an appropriate level. The introduction of 'challenge zones' gives the most able pupils the potential for more independent learning. Monitoring is usually effective and enables teaching to be alert to the pupils' progress but at times during longer lessons, checks on the pupils' levels of understanding are not sufficiently thorough. On these occasions, tasks are not always adjusted in a timely manner. The most able pupils in particular have to wait too long to move on to activities that provide sufficient challenge.
- 3.19 Teaching uses a variety of methods and fulfils the school's aim to ensure that pupils work well with others. Pupils learn effectively in groups, especially during practical activities, where they demonstrate good teamwork, organising one another. Relationships are strong. Most pupils ask for guidance, from their peers as well as from their teachers, when they want to check they are working accurately, because they are keen to complete given tasks. Occasionally, this means that there is too much of an emphasis on finishing the task rather than understanding it in great detail. Classroom routines are well established and enable pupils to understand how to sustain work until tasks are completed. Time is carefully managed, particularly

during single lessons, and learning activities follow on quickly and progressively as pupils build on their skills.

- 3.20 Most marking is frequent and ensures that pupils know how they have been successful in their work, as well as the aspects that need improving. Routines to follow up this advice are not fully established in all classes and some pupils take time to reinforce the correction during subsequent learning activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 successfully take responsibility for checking their progress against skills targets in English and mathematics, and this motivates them to raise their attainment.
- 3.21 Teaching is alert to the needs of pupils with SEND and those learning EAL. Staff supporting these pupils take particular care to help them to grow in confidence so that they are able to make their own choices and learn effectively.

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 good.
- 4.2 Children in the EYFS are keen to help and to co-operate with one another and with adults. They work well together and they use their imagination to make the most of stimulating learning experiences, such as creating their own pirate ship. Children are highly independent and they talk sensibly with adults and one another, sharing their experiences of school and home.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development is good. In accordance with the school's aims, the wide-ranging programme of visits and assemblies promotes the pupils' increasing awareness of the world around them. They are sensitive to one another's feelings and values, and they are proud to be part of the school community. The personal, social and health education programme gives pupils the chance to reflect on their experiences and they develop good self-esteem and self-knowledge. Pupils are alert to change and how this affects those around them. Some pupils are able to debate abstract ideas, such as how to distinguish between easy and difficult choices. Pupils respond thoughtfully to the many opportunities they have to use their imagination. For example, older pupils used a wide range of musical instruments to express powerfully the emotions they felt in a piece of drama. Occasionally, other creative tasks which are too prescriptive mean that pupils miss the deeper meaning within them.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral development is excellent. Across the school, pupils show consideration for one another and respect for their teachers through good manners and excellent behaviour. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, and they all respond pragmatically when sanctions are occasionally awarded to those who fall short of the school's high expectations. The school successfully fulfils its aim to promote tolerance and consideration for others, and pupils demonstrate a strong moral conscience. For example, they have instigated fund-raising appeals on hearing of the impact of natural disasters on families across the world. Pupils take care of their own environment and they have recently earned a national silver ecological award through the work of the 'eco' club. Their involvement in local magistrate competitions effectively promotes their understanding and respect for the civil and criminal law in England.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. The school successfully fulfils its aim to enable pupils to work well with others. The many opportunities for pupils to be part of a group enables them to develop a strong sense of responsibility for others. They are ready volunteers and they recognise an obligation to help each other. Pupils learn to appreciate one another's strengths and how best to maximise their contribution to a team effort. By the time they leave the school, many pupils have held a leadership role such head boy or girl, house captain or prefect. Pupils fulfilling these roles do so with dedication and humility.
- 4.6 Pupils demonstrate good cultural development. The school actively promotes their understanding of fundamental British values. Cultural differences are celebrated and pupils show a rich appreciation of different faiths and beliefs. They actively defend the right of all people to make their own decisions, and individual liberty. Inconsistencies in the way the new curriculum is being implemented mean that at times cultural implications of topics are overlooked and pupils lack opportunities to

understand fully about their heritage, limiting their development. Pupils show an appreciation for art and they benefit from a good range of cultural visits, such as trips to the ballet and theatre. They demonstrate a good knowledge of particular public institutions, such as the NHS, the monarchy and Parliament.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Positive relationships between staff and children in the EYFS ensure that children feel safe and happy. Children follow their teachers' excellent examples and they learn to treat one another with respect and kindness. Key workers know the particular children in their care extremely well, and they communicate the needs and successes of these children to their parents on a daily basis.
- 4.9 Throughout the school, teams of teachers communicate on a regular basis to ensure that they are all alert to any fluctuations in the pupils' behaviour or achievement. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and they intervene quickly with extra help, including specialist assistance where desirable. For example, the school has introduced a highly successful strategy to support an increasing number of pupils with speech and language difficulties. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils are confident about joining the school when they first arrive and that they have considered all the adjustments necessary for an optimistic start to senior school.
- 4.10 In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a few parents did not agree that the school deals with bullying well. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Inspectors found that the school has suitable measures to guard against bullying, which are implemented effectively. Pupils understand about the various forms of bullying; incidents are extremely rare and pupils are confident that staff deal with any allegations effectively. Pupils respond extremely well to the reward systems. They are highly motivated to behave well and to earn the 'star of the week' award or, in particular, the 'roll of honour'. A small minority of pupils indicated in their questionnaire responses that they do not feel that sanctions are awarded fairly. The school's records show that incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare and use of sanctions is appropriate. In discussions, pupils could all account for the sanctions that are awarded.
- 4.11 A minority of pupils indicated that they think there are insufficient opportunities for them to share their views. Inspectors found that representatives on the school council play a key role in organising fund-raising events. Recent improvements which allow other pupils to make suggestions in the running of the school now enable more pupils to be involved, express their opinions and receive a response.
- 4.12 The school successfully promotes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have opportunities for physical activity in lessons and extra-curricular activities, and are very energetic during their free time. Children in the EYFS know that exercise is good for them and recognise the significance of personal hygiene. The school provides healthy and nutritious meals, which are popular with all pupils.
- 4.13 The school is implementing a suitable accessibility plan to improve the provision for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.15 Arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils are effective. Staff with designated responsibilities ensure that all colleagues are kept up to date with changes in legislation. These are now accurately reflected in the child protection policy, following guidance given during the inspection. Leadership maintains good links with local agencies and consults with them promptly when necessary. All vetting checks have been completed but prior to the inspection there were shortcomings in the manner in which the single central register of appointments was maintained; these were corrected promptly.
- 4.16 Fire detection devices and alarms are maintained in good order, with frequent checks made to ensure reliability. The school reviews the fire risk assessment annually, with further validation by external specialists. A comprehensive range of risk assessments ensures that appropriate control measures are in place to safeguard pupils during everyday activities as well as on educational visits.
- 4.17 A high proportion of staff are qualified to administer first aid. Fewer staff take responsibility for administering medicines, which ensures that this is managed carefully, in consultation with parents. Appropriate facilities are available for sick or injured pupils. The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and have been correctly stored for the previous three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 The directors provide effective oversight of the finance and resources of the school, enabling it to improve the facilities. Governance takes an interest in the physical environment of the EYFS, which has led to appropriate refurbishment. The directors encourage the school in meeting its aims and they recognise the value of the nurturing family atmosphere, which prepares pupils to succeed in the next stage of their education. Directors promote the school community, attend some events with parents and provide useful opportunities for leadership to collaborate with others in the proprietorial group.
- 5.3 The directors have confidence in the school leadership but their involvement in monitoring educational provision is not sufficiently thorough, and policy decisions are not always well suited to the specific needs of the school. A new assessment procedure has been introduced but its implementation to provide the greatest benefit to the pupils' achievement has not yet been realised. Improvements to the curriculum and to the quality of teaching throughout the school have been limited by the directors' lack of involvement.
- 5.4 Governors check the suitability of all staff and volunteers working with the pupils, but their monitoring of the single central register of appointments does not provide the level of challenge necessary to ensure its accuracy. Governance delegates the review of safeguarding and child protection procedures to the school leadership. Members of the board ratify amendments to the policy but they are not sufficiently well informed about current requirements to ensure that these are included. Appropriate oversight is in place to ensure that procedures effectively safeguard the pupils' welfare, health and safety.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 Leadership has firmly established the educational direction of the school and is effective in promoting its aims. With the strong emphasis on creating a secure and caring environment, pupils grow in confidence, they achieve well and they are suitably prepared for the next stage in their education. The school community has remained united during a time of adjustment.
- 5.7 The EYFS is managed effectively. Staff contribute to the evaluation of the educational programmes, and this leads to greater understanding about how best to adjust plans so that they sustain the ambitious pursuit of excellence in meeting the needs of the children. Staff supervision arrangements are highly constructive and all benefit from targeted training to enhance their practice.
- 5.8 Leadership and management are effective in discharging their responsibilities, such as those for safeguarding the welfare of pupils, including in the EYFS. All staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding and health and safety. Subject

leadership is shared amongst all class teachers, who each take responsibility for developing areas of the curriculum. They collaborate effectively to design varied learning experiences and guide one another to develop their expertise in each of their particular subject disciplines. The woodland area within the school grounds is a particular feature that encourages pupils to take an interest in the environment and to learn in different ways. Teachers are working to implement all curriculum developments but the benefits of new learning strategies do not have consistent impact throughout the school.

- 5.9 Following the recommendations made at the time of the previous inspection, leadership has increased the level of monitoring within the school. Information about the pupils' achievement is checked routinely to identify individual pupils at risk of falling behind. Appropriate support is put in place and these pupils catch up quickly. Patterns in the pupils' overall achievement are monitored annually for inconsistencies and leadership introduces appropriate strategies to address any issues. For example, an approach to helping pupils to learn letters and sounds was altered when it became clear that achievement was lower in reading than in mathematics. This has led to a gradual improvement in the pupils' attainment in reading. Performance management cycles are well established and staff are keen to develop their practice. Since the previous inspection, the pupils' independence has been promoted more effectively as a result of leadership initiatives in the classroom, such as the introduction of 'challenge zones'. It is taking time for all staff to adjust to the new assessment system introduced by the board of directors; this is not yet being used to its full advantage to identify useful adjustments to the curriculum.
- 5.10 The overall self-evaluation of the school is accurate and leadership has a good understanding of the effectiveness of the educational provision. Nevertheless, monitoring records are not analysed in sufficient detail to enable all development priorities to emerge. Improvement plans focus strongly on enhancing systems and facilities but lack sufficient regard for the intended impact on raising pupils' achievement and personal development.
- 5.11 Parents are highly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. They consider that their children make good progress and they are almost unanimous in their views that the pupils are happy and safe because the school looks after them well and that it maintains high standards of behaviour. A few parents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of leadership and management. Inspectors found that the relationship between leadership and governance is not fully effective. A very small minority of parents felt that the school does not give appropriate support to more able pupils. Inspectors found that challenge for these pupils is limited in scope.
- 5.12 Relationships with parents of children in the EYFS are strong. Parents acknowledge that they are key partners in their children's learning because of the exchange of information initiated by the school. Weekly updates, which inform parents of their children's progress, provide parents with useful guidance to reinforce these developments at home. Parents share subsequent successes in their children's learning journals, and the school builds on these developments to ensure continuity in each child's learning.
- 5.13 Parents throughout the school have good opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children through formal parent-teacher consultation evenings held twice a year, and informally through the home-school link book. Reports are published once a year. These are detailed and positive; they give parents a good

picture of their children's strengths and weaknesses, and some contain helpful advice on how pupils may improve their learning. Parents attend the wide variety of school performances, celebration assemblies and sports competitions.

- 5.14 Leadership ensures that parents are very much part of the school community. The decision to combine the parent forum with parent teacher association meetings enables parents share their views about the school. The welcome meeting at the start of each academic year helps parents and their children to adjust to the routines of a new timetable effectively.
- 5.15 Parents are provided with all necessary information about the school. They appreciate the school's colourful and informative weekly newsletters, which provide details of forthcoming events and celebrate pupils' successes.
- 5.16 Parents are pleased that they receive timely responses to their questions. A few parents expressed discontent with the manner in which the school handles concerns. Inspectors found that the school deals with complaints in accordance with its suitable, published procedures, and that it records all concerns and any action taken appropriately.

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