



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

THE POINTER SCHOOL

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The Pointer School

Full Name of School	The Pointer School
DfE Number	203/6065
Address	The Pointer School 19 Stratheden Road Blackheath London SE3 7TH
Telephone Number	020 8293 1331
Fax Number	087 1714 3161
Email Address	headmaster@pointers-school.co.uk
Headmaster/Proprietor	Mr Robert Higgins
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	341
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (193 boys; 148 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 91 5-11: 250
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Kacey Greenwood
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	16 Sep 2014 to 19 Sep 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The school has not previously been inspected by ISI.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Mr Christopher Sanderson	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Marilyn Fenn	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mr Andrew Rudkin	Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)
Mrs Eithne Webster	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Pointer School is a co-educational day school, located in Blackheath, adjacent to the heath, established by Miss Muriel and Miss Dela Pointer in 1950. The sisters were dancers and the school evolved from their original establishment for the performing arts. It provides an education founded on the Christian faith, for pupils from the ages of three to eleven. The main premises are located in a detached Victorian house. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the two Year 5 classes are situated in a Georgian building a short walk away. These facilities have been added to the school's premises since the previous inspection, undertaken by Ofsted in 2008. The school is a limited company, its headmaster being the sole proprietor. He is assisted by an advisory board.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide learning for life and to maintain its Christian ideals in all its undertakings, placing emphasis on personal faith, respect, integrity and friendship. It seeks to discover and develop individual talents, enabling every child, through love, guidance, encouragement, discipline and hard work, to meet the increasingly difficult challenges of everyday life. Through a broad, balanced, relevant, rich and differentiated curriculum, appropriate for the needs of each child, the school aims for its pupils to be well educated, with a love of learning, ready to engage with a wider world, happy and self-confident, with a good sense of humour, and generous in spirit, kind to others and aware of others' feelings.
- 1.3 At the time of inspection there were 341 pupils in total on roll, of whom just under three-fifths were boys. Of the 91 children in the EYFS, 27 attended part-time in the Nursery. Most pupils come from professional, business or financial backgrounds. They represent over 30 nationalities. About three-quarters of the pupils are European and a growing proportion are of Far Eastern descent. The ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.4 Most pupils enter the school in the EYFS, following a family interview with the headmaster. Any who are admitted after the age of five take a written test for diagnostic purposes. There are 96 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). At the time of the inspection assessments were being undertaken to determine how many would receive support for their English in the current academic year. In the previous academic year, the school provided support to 8 pupils with EAL. Of the 39 pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 35 receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care plan attend the school.
- 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 Pupils' achievements are excellent both in class and in activities; their learning strongly reflects the school's aims. Throughout the school, attainment is excellent; pupils articulate confidently and have well-developed literacy and numeracy skills. Their exemplary attitudes and positive relationships with staff and one another promote excellent progress. Excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision is characterised by a broad and well-planned curriculum, which ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning, and an extensive range of activities, suitable for the range of aptitudes and accessible to all ages. The curriculum provides excellent support and challenge to pupils across the range of abilities and to those with EAL. Excellent teaching successfully promotes the school's aim to develop well-educated, self-confident individuals with a love of learning. The school has responded successfully to a recommendation of the previous inspection to ensure consistency in the excellent quality of teaching in all age groups. Lessons are managed efficiently and make excellent use of high quality resources. Marking is timely and informative, but not always expressed in vocabulary and handwriting that are readily accessible to younger pupils.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, pupils' personal development is excellent. They behave well and are polite and confident. They demonstrate excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Within the school's culturally diverse population, pupils mix extremely well and show great respect for one another. They engage well in charitable ventures but do not generally assume responsibility in this area. Pastoral care is excellent. Staff provide exceptional support and guidance, creating a strong family atmosphere, in which every individual is valued. Pupils are keenly encouraged to eat healthily and engage regularly in exercise. They contribute their views on the life of the school. Welfare, health and safety are excellent. Pupils feel happy and safe. Staff have undertaken appropriate training in safeguarding, and suitable measures reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Health and safety procedures demonstrate a high level of awareness and promote a safe environment. Medical arrangements meet requirements.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. The proprietor draws well on the skills and experience of the advisory board in maintaining the school's aims and ethos. Governance demonstrates a detailed oversight of the school and clear insight in evaluating its work, strengths and areas for development, ensuring that the school meets its regulatory responsibilities and plans successfully for the future. Throughout the school, leadership and management are excellent, ensuring that policies are implemented successfully and that due attention is paid to the safeguarding of pupils. Careful monitoring and evaluation ensure that plans are prioritised and targets achieved. The school is particularly successful in the appointment of high quality staff, strongly supportive of its Christian ethos. Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. Parents are highly satisfied with all aspects of the education, care and support provided for their children. They value highly the school's communication and the manner in which concerns are handled.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that comments in marking are consistently expressed in vocabulary and handwriting that are readily accessible by the pupils.
2. Further develop the pupils' responsibility by enabling them to take more initiative in the planning of the school's charity events and the selection of charities.

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 Pupils are very well educated in line with the school's aims to be well educated, with a love of learning, and to extend children to the furthest possible point. Throughout the school, pupils are articulate and confidently talk about a range of topics. Their co-operative learning is a particular strength; pupils share ideas with assurance and listen attentively to others' points of view.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS enjoy their experiences and make excellent progress in their learning and development. The youngest children are able to identify shapes, listen to stories and use numbers, as, for example, when describing animals going into Noah's Ark. They are beginning to recognise letters and can repeat the sounds they represent. Reception children are learning to write the letters and many can recognise their names. They are beginning to count and undertake simple arithmetic, some able to explain, for example, how many chairs are left if two are taken away from the six present.
- 3.4 Across all stages, pupils demonstrate well-developed literacy skills and use well-chosen vocabulary when discussing ideas or giving reasons for their opinions. They draw on an extensive range of writing styles, with thoughtful expression. The presentation of work is generally excellent in all subjects. Pupils use well-advanced reasoning skills and respond positively to being challenged to think critically. The small number of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire all agreed that they are encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently. Numeracy skills are strong and are applied effectively across subjects, for example when discussing money in a humanities lesson. Pupils demonstrate very capable skills when using information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the curriculum.
- 3.5 Pupils are successful in a wide range of activities. These achievements make a significant contribution to their individual confidence. They achieve success in drama and instrumental music examinations. Their games and physical education (PE) skills develop well. School teams have enjoyed recent success in regional chess and debating competitions.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and standardised measures of attainment, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. They follow a challenging curriculum, and when they leave the school they transfer to a range of senior schools of their choice, a significant proportion gaining scholarships.
- 3.7 This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils' progress is high in relation to pupils of similar ability. Throughout the school, pupils with SEND or EAL make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported in class. More able pupils and those with particular talents make excellent progress in the classroom and develop their skills further in the extensive programme of extra-curricular activities.

- 3.8 Pupils show a very positive attitude to learning in all areas of school life. Children of all abilities in the EYFS are enthusiastic learners and gain pride and confidence in their achievements, both in teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. The positive relationships shared by the pupils throughout the school facilitate learning of a high quality. They apply themselves diligently, showing great perseverance. Both in and out of the classroom pupils work collaboratively in pairs and small groups. They are highly motivated, take pride in their work and demonstrate great enjoyment in this and in their school life.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The school fully meets its aim of offering a broad, balanced, relevant, rich and differentiated curriculum. The successful coverage of the requisite areas of learning is enhanced by a wide range of subjects, including two modern foreign languages from the EYFS onwards.
- 3.11 The rich and stimulating curriculum facilitates high standards in relation to the age, ability and needs of the pupils. Specialist teaching in music, drama and modern foreign languages further enhances the quality of the curriculum. The provision for personal, social, health and economic education is woven successfully through the curriculum, particularly in science and religious education, and strongly supports the pupils' personal development. In the EYFS, detailed planning based on a thorough understanding of children's developmental stages, enables the educational programmes to meet or surpass the requirements of the EYFS framework, ensuring that the needs of all children are met, including those with SEND or EAL and the most able. Throughout the school, the curriculum strongly sustains its founders' commitment to the performing arts; performance and creative expression permeate the life of the school through art, drama and music, within and beyond the classroom, in assemblies, concerts and public presentations. A public speaking competition for older pupils enables them to build their self-confidence within an encouraging, familiar environment. The calendar of inter-school fixtures is relatively limited; the school is seeking to increase this, particularly through its recent affiliation to an independent schools association. Pupils enjoy well-designed outside spaces, equipped with an exciting range of resources and activities. Recreational times are further enhanced through an externally provided service that engages the pupils in a wide range of exciting activities, benefiting their physical development, teamwork and engagement in exercise, and promoting high standards of behaviour.
- 3.12 Further development of the role of subject leader has strengthened the curriculum in all age groups. The regular review of policies for the curriculum ensures that it remains current and that resources are used well in its implementation. The incorporation of pupils' suggestions is a key feature, sustaining their interest and engagement. Careful individual guidance and advice on the selection of a senior school, provided for pupils and parents from Years 4 to 6, are key factors in the pupils' success in securing a place at their school of choice.
- 3.13 Documentation is of a high standard, the best examples providing extremely well for continuity and progression in learning. Curriculum plans include information on assessment, reporting, provision for pupils with SEND or EAL and development planning, providing strong support to teaching and learning. The identification of the needs of individuals and the consequent support provided, for all learning requirements, are strong factors in the school's provision. The close matching of

tasks to pupils' abilities, the well-focused deployment of teaching assistants throughout the school and the commitment to small class sizes all contribute strongly to the accessibility of the curriculum by pupils of all abilities. The use of ICT is integrated well across all areas of the curriculum.

- 3.14 The school provides an extensive choice of sporting, creative, social and intellectual extra-curricular activities, ranging from food technology and Mandarin to archery and horse riding. These are accessible to and suitable for pupils of all ages and are highly popular. The curriculum is further enriched by regular off-site visits, closely linked to a wide range of curricular topics, including residential trips for Years 3 to 6. Year 6 pupils, for example, gain significantly from their trip to the Isle of Wight, where they enjoy the challenge of an extensive outdoor pursuits programme.
- 3.15 Pupils benefit from the school's many strong links with the local community. The regular use of the local church for assemblies enables all members of the school to gather together, reinforcing its evident sense of community. Pupils make good use of a local swimming pool and the nearby heath for sporting activities. Their participation in local events and activities, such as singing at a nearby home for the elderly, together with their support for national and international charities, strengthens their social awareness and their understanding of other cultures.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 High quality teaching successfully promotes the aim of the school to develop pupils' progress in becoming well-educated, self-confident individuals with a love of learning. Following a recommendation of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching in particular year groups has improved to match that in the rest of the school. Teaching consistently promotes the pupils' enthusiasm to learn and achieve.
- 3.18 Teaching is informed well by a comprehensive understanding of each pupil's learning and personal needs. Thorough planning takes close account of pupils' previous learning and how progress can best be achieved. Encouraging and supportive marking, suitably guided by detailed whole-school policies, generally gives pupils a clear indication of how they can improve their work. However, not all marking and comments are written in vocabulary and handwriting that younger pupils can readily understand. Constructive informal and formal assessments throughout the school pertinently inform future planning for progress. An exemplary system of tracking children's progress in the EYFS enables early identification of their needs, leading to well-targeted interventions that have a beneficial impact on the children's progress. Pupils particularly appreciate how their targets for improvement enable achievement and promote their self-esteem.
- 3.19 The excellent teaching draws particularly on strong subject knowledge and skilful engagement of the pupils' interest. Pupils progress purposefully through activities that are skilfully presented to appeal to a broad range of learning styles. Teaching ensures that pupils know the learning objectives for lessons, and consistently promotes a vibrant learning environment in which pupils are sufficiently confident to discuss work and ideas without inhibition. Lessons are managed efficiently, ensuring time for the application of knowledge and skills, consolidation of learning and personal reflection. Adept organisation enables activities to be adjusted or tasks revisited to give further clarification and practice as required.

- 3.20 Teaching makes exceptionally good use of high quality resources, particularly interactive whiteboards, and fully incorporates the expertise of highly skilled teaching assistants to work with individuals or small groups, contributing significantly to pupils' progress, self-esteem and success. In the EYFS, teachers and assistants ensure a secure, supportive environment, where child-accessible resources and activities provide challenging experiences. Regular and rigorous self-evaluation and assessment enable high standards to be maintained and identify areas for further development, to enable all children to achieve the highest level of which they are capable. Staff in the EYFS have high expectations for the children in their care and are skilful at providing a variety of activities that enable the children to extend their learning and personal development.
- 3.21 The majority of teaching is particularly engaging. The pace and content challenge pupils of all abilities, generating interest and encouraging a willingness to learn and achieve. As pupils move up the school, teaching ensures that they take increasing responsibility for their own progress and become more independent learners who are clear about their learning and behaviour targets and take pride in achieving them.
- 3.22 Teaching benefits strongly from a detailed understanding of pupils' individual personalities and abilities. Excellent formal and informal practices for communicating pastoral and academic information ensure the pupils' continued academic and personal development. The contribution of the learning support department plays a significant role in the nurture of pupils' self-esteem and progress, ensuring that pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND, the more able and those with EAL, benefit from well-structured, personalised learning targets that provide well-focused challenge.

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 Pupils' personal development distinctly reflects the school's aims to maintain its Christian ideals, placing emphasis on personal faith, respect, integrity and friendship and ensuring that pupils are happy and self-confident, with a good sense of humour and generous in spirit, kind to others and aware of others' feelings, and ready to engage with a wider world.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. The strong Christian ethos is evident throughout the school. Pupils appreciate the chance to express their feelings by helping to compose class prayers. Pupils exhibit clear self-awareness and demonstrate self-confidence, both in and out of the classroom. They readily show initiative and are mature beyond their years. Children in the EYFS are friendly and confident when talking to adults and each other; for example, they respond cheerfully to the morning greetings from staff.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. From the youngest year groups, they have a keen understanding of the class rules displayed in their classrooms. They exhibit high levels of self-discipline, showing respect and consideration towards others. Pupils appreciate the school's various rewards for good character and clearly understand why they are received.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. The pupils show respect for all members of the school community. They are personable and keen to share their experiences with others. They support each other, and from the youngest age know that someone sitting on the 'buddy bench' would like a friend. They are polite and helpful to visitors, clearly proud of their school. They take on responsibility readily, helping in the classroom and around the school or acting as members of the school council, elections for which develop a good understanding of the workings of democracy. They co-operate readily in group activities, and they listen attentively to the ideas of others; children in the EYFS gain a good understanding of this through 'circle time'. They relish taking on the responsibility of being leader for the day. Well-focused adult-led activities in the setting, such as using bicycles made for two, enable the children to develop a strong sense of co-operation and support. Pupils put forward good ideas through their school council representatives, which have resulted in improvements in the playground and changes to lunch menus. In assemblies, they celebrate enthusiastically one another's successes, whether academic, social or artistic. They show warmth and compassion towards others and develop a sense of empathy and responsibility for those less fortunate than themselves, for example when studying Bible stories. This is seen in the enthusiasm with which they contribute to the school's chosen charities. Pupils do not generally have a role in choosing which good causes to support or planning fund-raising events.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. Their awareness of their own background and that of others develops very well through the wide-ranging curriculum and involvement in artistic and musical activities. In the younger classes, awareness of other cultures develops through presentations from pupils and parents on their customs and festivals. Pupils greatly appreciate the values and traditions of

peers from cultures other than their own. They are able to talk freely about their experiences, confident that they will be respected and appreciated.

- 4.7 By the time the pupils leave the school they have developed a high level of maturity and confidence, which equips them extremely well for their transition into senior school.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The exceptional support and guidance provided by the staff are firmly rooted in their clear enthusiasm to ensure the best for every pupil, creating a strong family atmosphere in which every individual is valued. The school therefore meets its aim to enable pupils to meet their challenges through love, guidance, encouragement, discipline and hard work. The strong caring ambience, inspired by the leadership and reflected throughout the school, promotes positive, caring relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves.
- 4.10 Children in the EYFS are happy and enthusiastic, and develop warm bonds with their key people. Staff prepare them well for their transition to other parts of the school. They become familiar with adults who work in other parts of the school, and with the older pupils through, for example, assemblies and clubs. At the time of the inspection, very early in the academic year, the children from the previous year's Nursery and Reception were already happily settled into their new respective classes.
- 4.11 Pupils are keenly encouraged to be healthy; topics within the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities develop an understanding of healthy eating. In both buildings, pupils enjoy meals produced from organic ingredients and kitchen staff have a clear awareness of the needs of those with particular dietary requirements. In PE lessons, break times and after-school activities throughout the school, pupils take part eagerly in regular exercise. Older children in the EYFS develop independence in changing their clothes for PE and managing their own hygiene needs. The children understand how they can support their own health through such practices as washing hands, drinking water and making healthy choices at lunch.
- 4.12 The school is successful in promoting good behaviour and enabling the pupils to develop a strong sense of self-discipline. It deals well with the infrequent occurrence of unacceptable behaviour, taking due account of any related difficulty or disability. Pupils are guided to correct behaviour through sensitive questioning. The school guards successfully against harassment and bullying. Every parent who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire praised the school's measures to prevent and tackle bullying. A detailed audit of educational access for pupils with SEND has resulted in a suitable three-year plan to improve provision in this respect.
- 4.13 The school engages successfully with pupils to seek their views. It ensures that they feel welcome to discuss their ideas and concerns, and undertakes an annual questionnaire, whose results are considered in preparing the school development plan.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 A clear safeguarding policy, known to staff and available on the school website, provides a secure framework for safeguarding arrangements, ensuring due regard for official guidance and the characteristics and ethos of the school. Thorough procedures for the recruitment of staff are duly recorded in a central register of appointments. All staff have undertaken training in safeguarding, according to their responsibilities. Safeguarding training is included in the school's induction procedures and, from the EYFS onwards, pupils are taught about keeping safe on the internet.
- 4.16 Practices to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff demonstrate a high level of awareness. The school takes all necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Risk assessment procedures are thorough and are shared throughout the school. Fire safety is managed carefully by experienced and qualified staff who ensure regular testing of equipment and appropriate evacuation drills on both sites. The regular testing of electrical equipment, detailed planning for off-site visits, rigorous health and food hygiene practices in the kitchens, and regular review of health and safety records and procedures promote a safe environment for pupils. From the youngest classes, pupils develop an understanding of how to manage risk relative to their ages. Pupils follow well-planned safety routines in the buildings and playgrounds, and when moving between the two sites. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all parents noted that their children are happy and feel safe.
- 4.17 Medical rooms in both buildings make the requisite provision for pupils who are ill or injured. A high proportion of staff have undertaken first-aid training, and procedures for first aid and the administration of medicines are carefully planned and effective in meeting the pupils' needs. The school plans in detail to ensure the welfare, health and safety of any pupils with SEND. Admission and attendance registers are completed with due care and are archived in accordance with requirements.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The proprietor, who is also the headmaster, draws on the skills and experience of an advisory board, together with the advice of a wider compass of professional expertise, to assist him in ensuring that the school is successful in meeting its aims and upholding its strong Christian ethos. The proprietor's presence in the school as headmaster, alongside close communication with staff and parents and the careful analysis of data, provides a detailed oversight of the work of the school. The support and guidance of the advisory board, and the broader range of advice, provided in areas such as finance, law and architecture, ensure that governance is securely founded on a detailed insight into the life of the school, including the EYFS, enabling careful analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- 5.3 The advisory board provides considerable educational expertise, ensuring that governance fulfils its responsibilities to provide high educational standards. The highly motivated and skilled staff and high standards of accommodation and resources demonstrate well-informed strategic and financial planning, based on a detailed understanding of the needs and ethos of the school, and close monitoring and evaluation of its work. Since the previous inspection, for example, considerable investment in a newly acquired building has provided the EYFS with an attractive, well-resourced facility, enabling the children to benefit from bright, airy rooms and inviting outside areas. Pupils clearly benefit from a very well-resourced school with bright, welcoming classrooms and high standards of maintenance on both sites, all of which contribute to the high quality of curricular provision.
- 5.4 A member of the advisory board undertakes the appraisal of the proprietor, adding further to the strong support and challenge provided, and ensuring that the work of the board enables governance to provide an excellent stimulus for the school's growth and improvement.
- 5.5 Governance is highly successful in discharging its statutory responsibilities. Members of the advisory board assist the proprietor in undertaking the annual review of safeguarding and ensure that any matters arising are addressed promptly.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.7 At all levels of responsibility, highly effective leadership and management ensure that the school meets its aim to enable pupils to be well educated, with a love of learning, ready to engage with a wider world. Senior leaders ensure that the school's policies are successfully implemented and that the safeguarding of pupils is managed efficiently. Well-defined educational direction is provided through clearly understood systems, which promote the development of pupils' excellent personal qualities and their high levels of achievement.
- 5.8 The leadership team and subject leaders regularly evaluate the success of the school through the study of assessment data, discussions in staff meetings, which encourage open dialogue, and by assessing the success of pupils in gaining entry to their next schools. The observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work contribute to a clear understanding of the quality of the school's provision and enable perceptive planning for improvement. All staff are able to contribute to development planning. Action plans are prioritised clearly in the school development plan and targets set prudently. Close monitoring of such targets ensures that they are achieved.
- 5.9 Inspirational leadership in the EYFS ensures that staff speak with clear dedication about the aim of improving the already high standards. Leadership staff in the EYFS demonstrate excellent oversight; their monitoring systems ensure the implementation of the educational, safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS. Their close links with the local authority and other external agencies ensure that they remain up to date with any changes in requirements.
- 5.10 The school is particularly successful in appointing qualified and high quality staff. Through the excellence of their teaching and pastoral care, they contribute significantly to the Christian ethos of the school, nurturing its aims of developing personal faith, respect, integrity and friendship. Liaison with a designated leader for the classroom support staff throughout the school, who attends staff meetings, ensures effective communication with the school's management. Highly motivated maintenance, catering and administrative staff strongly support the school's ethos and play a key role in the care and development of the pupils and the success of the school.
- 5.11 Excellent systems for staff appraisal are fully established throughout the school and involve both teaching and non-teaching staff. Through appraisal the leadership ensures that relevant training needs are clearly identified. These are addressed through formal training and focused staff meetings. Additionally, in the EYFS, supervision arrangements enable staff to discuss with their line managers the educational programmes, the children's progress or their own professional development.
- 5.12 Management ensures that clear policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are understood and implemented by all staff, and that they are fully aware of their safeguarding and welfare, health and safety responsibilities and are appropriately trained; sufficient staff have undertaken safer recruitment training. Prior to staff

taking up their positions, the school follows a duly rigorous process to ensure the suitability of all staff to work with children.

- 5.13 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. Parents are highly satisfied with all aspects of the education, care and support provided for their children. Across the whole age range of pupils, parents value highly the range and quality of communication that they have with the school, particularly the informal opportunity to speak with staff at the beginning or end of the day. The new website, with access to a parent zone, plays a key role in ensuring that up-to-date information is available in a easily accessible form, including school and class news and diary dates. Regular class and school newsletters, the setting of homework, reading diaries and an 'open door' policy further strengthen communication and engagement between home and school.
- 5.14 The school has a warm and constructive relationship with parents, which accords with its aim to work closely with families and jointly support pupils' well-being and progress in meeting the challenges of everyday life. Extremely efficient liaison with parents in the EYFS ensures that children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception. Through the strong home-school relationship, the school gains a deeper understanding of the children and their achievements at home, and parents are guided in how they can promote their children's learning.
- 5.15 Parents are highly satisfied that any concerns they have are handled with sensitivity and care. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents of pupils in every age group demonstrated an extremely high level of satisfaction with the work of the school. Parents strongly expressed that their children are very well looked after and that the school enables them to achieve high levels of behaviour. They afforded high praise for the school's leadership, and all noted that their queries receive timely responses. Almost all would strongly recommend the school to another parent.
- 5.16 Parents are able to become involved actively in the life of the school, thus contributing to their children's all-round development. Liaising as a class parent representative, helping on school trips, organising parent events and sharing with the school professional expertise and cultural experiences contribute strongly to excellent relationships.
- 5.17 Parents receive comprehensive information about the school and the classes that their children are joining. The school's excellent provision of full academic formal reports each term provides parents with thorough updates on their children's work and progress. Together with consultation evenings, these provide clear advice about pupils' achievements and development, and how well they are meeting their targets for learning. 'Meet the Teacher' evenings at the start of the new school year serve well to establish a strong rapport between home and school.

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