



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**PATTISON COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Pattison College

Full Name of School	<b>Pattison College</b>
DfE Number	<b>331/6011</b>
Address	<b>Pattison College 86-90 Binley Road Coventry West Midlands CV3 1FQ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>024 7645 5031</b>
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Email Address	<b>office@pattisons.co.uk</b>
Principal/Proprietor	<b>Mrs Elizabeth McConnell</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 21</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>115</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed</b>
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): <b>18</b> 5-11: <b>30</b> 11-21 <b>67</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>16 Sept 2014 to 19 Sept 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The school has not been previously 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](http://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 Robin Gaff

Mrs Jacqueline Shackel

Mr Jack Williams

Mr Richard Balding

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Deputy Head, ISA school)

Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Pattison College was originally a dance school, founded by the present principal's mother. It opened in its present form in 1949, and continues to specialise in performing arts generally and dance specifically. It is a day school, located close to the centre of Coventry, for pupils aged from 3 to 21. The principal is also the sole proprietor.
- 1.2 The school has not been previously inspected by ISI. It was last inspected by Ofsted in September 2008.
- 1.3 The school does not select pupils on the basis of their academic ability. It accepts those pupils whom it considers would benefit from the type of education and the environment which it offers. The school seeks to provide pupils with a traditional education focused strongly on the individual. Its aims stress the importance in discipline, hard work, good manners and concern for others, and the creation of a family atmosphere in which all individuals are known to and valued by one another.
- 1.4 There are 115 pupils in the school, of whom 18 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), comprising Nursery and Reception, 30 are aged 5 to 11 and 67 are aged 11 to 21. There are substantially more girls on roll than boys in each year group. The prep school comprises the EYFS, Upper Infants (Years 1 and 2), Lower Juniors (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Juniors (Years 5 and 6). Pupils enter the senior school at the age of 11 and follow courses leading to GCSE qualifications. A small number of pupils aged between sixteen and twenty-one take the school's one-, two- or three-year musical theatre courses, which enable them to gain a number of qualifications in dance, drama and music. A significant proportion of pupils join the school at other than usual times for transfer.
- 1.5 Most pupils live in Coventry or the surrounding area. Pupils reflect the ethnic diversity of the area, with a wide range of nationalities and ethnic backgrounds represented in the school. A very small number of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and none receive specialist help with their English from the school. The school has identified eight pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), a small number of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. There are currently no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 Pupils join the school with a wide range of prior attainment. The ability profile of the school is in line with the national average.
- 1.7 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 are educated well, and the school is successful in meeting its aims. Children in the EYFS make excellent progress in their learning and development. This is because the staff have a thorough understanding of the children's different needs and interests, and provide children with stimulating, well-planned activities. In both the senior and the prep school, pupils' achievement, learning and progress are good. As a result, they gain qualifications which prepare them well for the next stage of their education and their future careers. Their achievements in performance-related activities, especially in dance, are excellent. Pupils benefit throughout the school from a broad and balanced curriculum. This places an appropriate emphasis, in line with the school's aims, on promoting pupils' confidence, as well as their academic achievement. Planned activities do not always sufficiently take into account the needs of different groups of pupils, including the most able and pupils with SEND. Teachers are highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. They know their pupils well and have high expectations of them. Teachers' marking does not always indicate sufficiently clearly what pupils must do to improve their work.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils in all year groups is excellent. Pupils are highly considerate of one another and establish strong working relationships with staff. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strong. Pupils benefit greatly from the school's meticulous arrangements for pastoral care. Pupils behave extremely well and feel safe. The school's procedures for staff recruitment are rigorous and effective, as are its arrangements for promoting pupils' safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 As principal, the proprietor knows the school, including the EYFS, extremely well, and understands its strengths and areas for further development. She ensures that the school complies fully with all statutory requirements. The proprietor also makes sure that the school benefits from the expertise of a range of external agencies. She provides a clear educational direction for the school and has succeeded in uniting the staff in their strong commitment to achieving its aims. Links with parents, who are highly supportive of the school, are excellent. Parents are particularly appreciative of its success in caring for their children and in developing their self-confidence. Leadership staff carefully assess pupils' progress. They have established good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching. These systems, however, have not yet succeeded in eliminating all inconsistencies in teachers' marking and in schemes of work, or in sharing in all areas of the school the excellent practice of the best teaching.

## **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. Improve the consistency of teachers' marking so that pupils always understand what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.
2. Ensure that schemes of work include more opportunities for all groups of pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
3. Ensure that excellent practice in teaching is shared more effectively throughout the school.

### **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. In the EYFS, all children make substantial progress in learning and development from a wide range of starting points. Outcomes for children in the Nursery class are well above expectations for this stage. They enhance their physical development, for example by using scissors safely and through their use of the adventure playground. Children listen carefully and respond promptly to instructions. They learn to explore their surroundings, and use their imagination by pretending to be teachers reading to a pupil during role play. Children become increasingly willing and able to talk to each other and to adults as they develop their independence. By the end of the Reception year, most children have far exceeded the national expectations for their learning and development. Children deal confidently with numbers greater than 20 and can add and subtract single-digit numbers. They can write complete sentences independently and know about the use of capital letters and full stops. Most children are able to read at a level above the expectations for their age.
- 3.3 In both the prep and the senior school, pupils develop good knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects. Pupils express themselves clearly and confidently in both speaking and writing. They enjoy reading and can read fluently and accurately by the time they leave the prep school. In the senior school they continue to make good progress in all these areas.
- 3.4 Pupils' responses to teachers' questions and their contributions to classroom discussions show their good powers of reasoning and their ability to apply what they have learned in solving problems. This was evident in a mathematics lesson in which Year 8 pupils showed that they had gained a secure grasp of the concept of plus and minus numbers.
- 3.5 The quality of pupils' artwork shows their well-developed creative skills. Pupils' achievements in the performing arts are excellent; they show extremely well-developed skills in drama, music and dance, where they master complex steps and figures, and perform them with confidence and enjoyment. Many pupils in a theatre craft activity displayed high levels of energy and strong performance skills, while those who were less confident or proficient also showed that they had made excellent progress in developing their competence.
- 3.6 Children in the EYFS demonstrate their achievement in this respect in the highly proficient way in which they hop and skip in time to music and play team games during physical education sessions. Pupils in both the prep and the senior school gain a wide range of awards in speaking, theatre arts, drama and dance.
- 3.7 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 both the ages of 7 and 11 have been above the national average for maintained primary schools. Performance at GCSE has been good in relation to the national average for maintained schools. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability.

- 3.8 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent throughout the school. They take great pride in their work, which is presented and organised extremely well. They remain focused and attentive throughout lessons and respond promptly to teachers' instructions and questions.
- 3.9 Pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, learn well and make good and sometimes excellent progress in lessons. When progress in lessons is slower, this is often because planned activities are not sufficiently precisely adapted to meet the needs of all groups.
- 3.10 By the time they leave the school, all pupils achieve qualifications that enable them to gain places at other local schools and colleges to study academic or vocational courses, and prepare them well for their future careers.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.12 The curriculum accords with the school's aims, and places a high and appropriate emphasis of the role of performing arts in developing pupils' skills, as well as their self-belief. The curriculum is appropriate for the needs of the pupils, with a significant focus on the performing arts alongside the traditional curriculum, which covers all required elements.
- 3.13 The use of detailed individual support plans, which are produced for each child in the EYFS, enables staff to ensure that activities and facilities meet the needs of all children. This includes those with SEND, some of whom benefit from additional support from outside agencies. Reception children who are exceeding the expectations for their age group are encouraged to begin Year 1 work. This, together with joint activities between the two classes, ensures that pupils' transition to the next stage of their education is smooth.
- 3.14 The prep school curriculum is appropriate for the pupils and successfully caters for the different needs and experiences of pupils in mixed-age classes. The coherence of transitions between Years 2 and 3, and from the prep to the senior school, has been improved, as was recommended at the school's previous inspection.
- 3.15 In the senior school, the curriculum is broad and balanced, and enables pupils in Year 11 to take a variety of subjects at GCSE. Physical, creative and aesthetic elements are particularly strong, as are those mathematical and scientific. Year 10 pupils have the opportunity to produce portfolios of artwork, which enables some to pursue art further when they leave the school.
- 3.16 Opportunities for cross-curricular learning occur throughout the senior school. For example, Year 7 pupils in a personal, social and health education lesson discussed issues relating to science and history with intelligence and considerable prior knowledge. The use of themes and topics in the prep school enables pupils to form effective links between subjects, for example in a discussion about the science of sound which took place in a music lesson.
- 3.17 The quality and scope of subject schemes of work are variable. All schemes take into account the required elements at different key educational stages. However, they do not always specify opportunities to assist pupils who require additional extension and challenge, or those who require extra help and support. The impact

of this was evident in a minority of the lessons observed and in some of the written work examined.

- 3.18 Post-16 courses in theatre arts are extremely successful in achieving the school's aim of enabling pupils to develop their interests and talents, and in preparing them for their chosen careers. Many of these pupils graduate as teachers of dance or move on to other careers in performing arts.
- 3.19 Extra-curricular activities in the performing arts are extensive and of high quality. The delivery of these activities is extremely strong, and is characterised by highly talented and enthusiastic instruction. A wide range of dance, speech, drama and musical activities is available to all pupils, including those with very different levels of ability. Sporting activities are available as an alternative to the performing arts, and opportunities for physical development are numerous.
- 3.20 Pupils were keen to report the view that their extra-curricular activities are a significant part of their school life. They participate enthusiastically and in large numbers in the activities on offer, and benefit from the absence of any significant boundary between extra-curricular and curricular experiences.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.21 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.22 Teaching in all areas of the school enables pupils to develop their self-confidence and their academic skills. This results in pupils of different abilities achieving well, in accordance with the school's aims.
- 3.23 Children in the EYFS enjoy their learning as they respond eagerly to the high expectations of the enthusiastic staff. Varied, well-planned and well-delivered activities enable all children to make excellent progress in developing their communication and independence skills and in their physical development. Staff produce comprehensive written and pictorial records of each child's learning and development. These help staff to plan the next steps in the children's learning, and also provide valuable information for parents about their children's progress.
- 3.24 Teachers are highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects, and understand the needs of the different age groups they teach. They succeed in communicating their enthusiasm to their pupils, so that pupils remain focused and engaged throughout lessons.
- 3.25 Teaching in the performing arts, including dance, music and drama, is highly proficient, in terms of skill in both performance and tuition. They model techniques and skills highly effectively in lessons and make sure that pupils understand exactly what they have to do to acquire them successfully. For example, in a dance lesson, the teacher explained each activity clearly and precisely, and demonstrated the required pattern of steps and movements, checking pupils' understanding at regular intervals, and providing constructive feedback about their performance. As a result, the pupils made excellent progress, and developed both their technical abilities and their self-confidence. Lessons in these areas also give post-16 pupils opportunities to develop their skills by leading activities, where they provide excellent models for younger pupils.
- 3.26 Teachers know their pupils very well, and explain tasks clearly. They establish cordial and productive working relationships with their pupils, creating a relaxed but

purposeful atmosphere in their classrooms. Teachers understand the potential barriers to success experienced by pupils with SEND and help them to overcome these. Thus all pupils, and especially those who lack confidence, are enabled to work productively and to make good progress. Pupils make highly positive comments about the extra help that teachers willingly provide.

- 3.27 Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of both their work and their behaviour, and emphasise appropriately the need for good presentation. In a range of subjects, teachers ensure that pupils understand the need for accuracy in written and spoken English.
- 3.28 Lessons are well organised and often include good opportunities for pupils to work both independently and co-operatively. Examples of excellent teaching seen included numerous opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning by working individually or with others. In relatively less effective lessons observed, teachers spent too long in introducing topics and tasks, so that pupils did not have sufficient time to reflect on and to develop their learning.
- 3.29 Teachers regularly assess and closely monitor the standards pupils reach and the progress they have made. This helps them to plan activities that enable pupils to build on what they have learned and to extend their learning further.
- 3.30 Teachers set homework regularly, ensuring that tasks are closely linked to the topics that pupils are studying. They mark pupils' work thoroughly and accurately, and ensure that pupils know the standards they are reaching. Some teachers provide detailed written comments about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work, but this is not consistently the case throughout the school. As a result, although pupils know the targets for which they aiming, they are not always clear about what they need to do reach them.
- 3.31 Teachers throughout the school make good use of the resources available to them. Children in the EYFS are enabled to learn effectively, and develop in a lively environment that supports the high quality teaching. The bright, spacious and well-equipped classrooms and well-designed outdoor areas enable children to develop their imaginative powers through, for example, role play, and to improve their skills in handling equipment. The apparatus in the adventure playground, together with the soft flooring, allows children to take risks in a safe and supportive environment.

## **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 of all ages have an excellent standard of personal development. They are confident and articulate, and have a strong sense of their ability to contribute to the school and the community beyond. The school achieves its aim of providing a caring, disciplined environment in which individuals can thrive. This is especially evident in the pupils' social and moral development. Pupils interviewed in both the prep and the senior school were polite, showed respect and consideration for each other, and articulated their beliefs with confidence and eloquence.
- 4.3 The spiritual development of pupils is excellent. This is evident, for example, in their reaction to a wide variety of music. In a Year 8 art lesson, the pupils showed a strong sense of the wonder of the natural world when studying butterflies. Pupils show a good understanding of different beliefs, through, for example, their study of the topic of creation in science. Regular opportunities to take part in individual religious observance are available for pupils who so wish. The school choir has performed to great acclaim at church services, for example at a head teachers' conference.
- 4.4 The moral development of pupils is excellent. Pupils show a secure understanding of right and wrong. Older pupils demonstrated this clearly in considering aspects of morality in literature, for example in discussing war poetry, and the implications of theft. Through the strong house system, pupils raise considerable sums of money for their chosen charities.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. A strength of the school is the interaction between pupils of different ages, with senior pupils acting as mentors for younger ones. Pupils in both the prep and the senior school take on many responsibilities that enhance their social development. For example, post-16 pupils assist in the supervision of prep school pupils in extra-curricular activities, while members of Year 9 act as monitors for younger pupils during their lunchtime. Strong social bonds are formed during group performance activities in dance, music and drama. Responses to the pupils' questionnaire showed that pupils value the 'family' nature of the school. A number commented favourably on pupils' care and concern for one another, especially for those joining the school during the course of the school year. This helps to enable these pupils to settle in quickly and successfully.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils benefit strongly from opportunities to consider cultural aspects of modern British life, particularly in religious education lessons, where they study, for example, Judaism in London, and in discussions surrounding the Scottish referendum. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of British values. They reported, for example, that they had learned a great deal from a visit the Houses of Parliament. Pupils from different backgrounds relate very well to one another, and show that they respect each other's faiths and traditions.
- 4.7 In the EYFS, children take part enthusiastically in all activities. They are able to build personal relationships, and play and communicate well with each other. They behave well, talk freely with one another other and with adults, and show respect for each other as they celebrate their differences, and learn to share and to take turns.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The staff are highly supportive of all pupils and provide effective guidance, in accordance with the school's aims.
- 4.10 The quality of pastoral care in the EYFS makes an excellent contribution to children's well-being. Every child has a named key person, enabling strong relationships to be established with both children and parents. This makes a significant contribution to children's development and is particularly beneficial to those who need extra support.
- 4.11 Pupils report that the quality of their relationships with staff and amongst themselves is excellent. Inspection findings confirmed this. Pupils of all ages mix together at various times during the school day. This fosters a strong sense of belonging and eases transitions throughout the school. The weekly book review in the senior school demonstrates that pupils are comfortable to discuss their progress with staff.
- 4.12 Pupils' behaviour throughout is excellent. Pupils are highly courteous to staff and considerate of one another. For example, a pupil spontaneously helped another who was struggling in a lesson, and all the pupils thanked their teacher when worksheets were handed out. Rules are clearly displayed and are understood by all. Pupils feel that rewards and sanctions are administered fairly. The school's effective behaviour management measures result in sanctions rarely having to be used.
- 4.13 In their responses to the questionnaire, a very small minority of parents indicated that they do not feel that the school always deals with bullying. Many parents, however, expressed their praise for the way the school looks after its pupils. Pupils themselves expressed no concerns about bullying, either in questionnaire responses or in the many discussions held with inspectors. They reported that any disagreements or minor disputes are resolved amicably by the pupils themselves, and that they are completely confident that staff would intervene effectively, should the need arise.
- 4.14 The school places a strong emphasis on healthy lifestyles. For example, pupils benefit strongly from dance activities, as well as visits to the local swimming pool and sports centre. Nutritious and healthy food is freshly prepared in the school dining room. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.15 The school has established an effective system for seeking pupils' views, which pupils value. One pupil from each class is elected to the school council, which meets regularly and enables pupils to discuss a variety of topics. In the senior school pupils use diaries to record any concerns and their interests, which they share in confidence with their tutors. Any issues which need further action are dealt with by senior school leaders. This provides both pupils and staff with valuable opportunities to help to resolve any personal or academic difficulties.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 A detailed programme ensures that that all members of staff, including those working in the EYFS, benefit from regular training on the safeguarding of children. As a result, teaching, support, catering and maintenance staff, as well as those who have specific responsibilities for pupils' safety, know what to do if they have any concerns. The school's policies and procedures show that it has a high regard for and takes full account of official guidance in this respect. The school liaises closely with external agencies, including the police and the local Children's Services department. Comprehensive information about the school's arrangements for safeguarding children is available to parents and to all other members of the school community. All appropriate checks on the suitability for employment of all staff have been made and recorded, indicating that rigorous recruitment procedures, fully in line with statutory requirements, are in place.
- 4.18 The school takes substantial measures to reduce the risk of fire. Regular fire practices are recorded meticulously and there is a rolling programme to check fire equipment. Other potential hazards are dealt with through the comprehensive programme of risk assessments covering all areas of school life, and these, together with health and safety procedures, including electrical testing, are reviewed and checked regularly.
- 4.19 The arrangements for the care of pupils who are unwell and for administering medicines are very thorough and details are recorded diligently. A comprehensive first-aid training programme is also in place and many staff have paediatric first-aid qualifications.
- 4.20 The school's admission and attendance records are completed in accordance with requirements and are stored appropriately. Pupils' attendance is monitored carefully, and any unexplained absence is followed up promptly and rigorously.
- 4.21 In the EYFS, safeguarding and welfare requirements are given high priority. Leadership and all other members of staff fulfil their responsibilities in meeting these requirements in all respects.

## **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 principal, in her role as proprietor, has sole responsibility for the school's governance, and has an extremely good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of its work, including the EYFS. This is because she closely monitors all aspects of its performance, including educational standards, and provides both support and challenge to those who hold specific responsibilities, and to the staff as a whole. She ensures that the school has the necessary staffing, financial and other resources.
- 5.3 As the proprietor, the principal is strongly supportive of the school's EYFS provision. She visits regularly, attends the weekly staff meetings and ensures that the setting is adequately funded. This promotes the children's safety, and enables them to develop according to their individual needs and to be cared for well. She ensures that all required policies and procedures are in place, and that they are implemented effectively, for the benefit of the children.
- 5.4 The principal has established highly effective links with a range of outside agencies and individuals, including representatives of the local authority. This enables the school to benefit from considerable expertise in, for example, welfare and legal matters.
- 5.5 The principal keeps fully up to date with developments in education and welfare by undertaking regular training. This helps her to ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements. She regularly and thoroughly reviews policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding and child protection annually, and how successfully they are being implemented. The principal ensures that arrangements for promoting pupils' health and safety and for the recruitment of new members of staff are robust and given a high priority.
- 5.6 The principal is knowledgeable about the school, and demonstrates strong commitment to ensuring that it continues to achieve its aims, to meet its pupils' needs and to develop their skills and talents.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.8 These factors contribute significantly to the school's success in achieving its aims, including the establishment of a strong family atmosphere, from which pupils benefit greatly and which is much appreciated by their parents.
- 5.9 The principal, working closely with senior colleagues, provides clear educational direction for the school. All members of staff focus strongly on ensuring that the school continues to succeed in meeting its aims. Leadership staff at all levels within the school, as well as other staff, are united in their strong commitment to providing

- pupils with a high standard of education, and in ensuring that pupils are safe and secure, and are looked after extremely well.
- 5.10 The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and its development plans place a strong emphasis on building on its strengths and addressing specifically its priorities for further development. The school has been successful in improving its systems for monitoring pupils' progress and in ensuring that strengths, including in the EYFS, have been consolidated.
  - 5.11 Leadership staff ensure that pupils' progress, in both the prep and the senior school, is checked regularly in order to address promptly any potential underachievement. Staff liaise closely together so that they can quickly identify any difficulties that individual pupils, including those with SEND, are experiencing. This enables staff to give pupils the extra help and support they need. The introduction of a management information system has improved systems for recording data about pupils' attainment and progress.
  - 5.12 Recruitment procedures, including for vetting new appointments before staff take up their posts, comply fully with statutory requirements.
  - 5.13 Care is taken to recruit staff who have high levels of expertise, and who are fully committed to promoting the school's values and to realising its objectives. They receive the required training in order to undertake their responsibilities effectively. All staff benefit from regular and appropriate training in safeguarding and child protection, as well as in welfare and health and safety procedures. This strengthens the school's arrangements for promoting the pupils' welfare, health and safety.
  - 5.14 In the EYFS, all members of the staff team appreciate the support provided by the regular supervision system. They value the opportunity to review their practice, to set targets for the future and to discuss their own professional development. Staff attend many training courses, which enables them to be aware of and to implement new developments. They share an ambitious vision for the setting. They meet regularly to evaluate their current practice and to explore how they could further develop and improve provision.
  - 5.15 The school has developed good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and assessment, for example by means of lesson observations and scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. These systems, however, are not as yet sufficiently well embedded. As a result, leadership staff have not yet succeeded in ensuring that marking is of a consistently high standard, or that excellent practice in teaching is shared and emulated fully throughout the school.
  - 5.16 Leadership staff regularly review the curriculum. They have succeeded in ensuring that it promotes pupils' academic achievement and their personal development, and that it meets all regulatory requirements. They have not yet ensured, however, that the curriculum enables all pupils to reach their potential in all areas of the curriculum.
  - 5.17 Links with parents are excellent. Parents are extremely satisfied overall with the education, care and support that the school provides for their children and with the quality of information they receive. They are very supportive of the school. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children feel safe and happy, and are well looked after at the school, and that the school has handled promptly and effectively any concerns or questions. Within the numerous letters of appreciation received from parents, many have been keen to acknowledge

the role the school has played in developing their children's confidence, and in preparing them for the next stage of their education and their subsequent careers.

- 5.18 Excellent relationships between parents and staff are established early, often from children's time in the Nursery, and are maintained throughout pupils' schooling. In the EYFS, parents play a key part in helping their children to settle in, and they are closely and actively involved in their children's development throughout their time in the setting.
- 5.19 Staff in both the prep and the senior school regularly make themselves available to parents before and after school. The active Parent Teacher Association raises significant sums of money for additional resources, such as playground equipment, through events such as the Late Summer Fair. Large numbers of parents attend the school's regular musical, dance and theatrical productions and performances.
- 5.20 An informative website and prospectus provide the parents of current and prospective pupils with detailed information about the school, as well as its policies and procedures. Those for dealing with concerns and complaints fully meet requirements.
- 5.21 Parents benefit from frequent opportunities to meet their children's teachers, both formally and informally, and receive regular written reports and information about the school's activities. Written reports for parents are of high quality. Reports are detailed and highly informative regarding pupils' learning and progress, and show that the staff know them extremely well.

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