



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

### **ST JOSEPH'S PARK HILL SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## St Joseph's Park Hill School

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Full Name of School       | <b>St Joseph's Park Hill School</b>  |
| DfE Number                | <b>888/6011</b>  |
| Registered Charity Number | <b>290544</b>  |
| Address                   | <b>St Joseph's Park Hill School<br/>Park Hill<br/>Padiham Road<br/>Burnley<br/>Lancashire<br/>BB12 6TG<br/>England</b> |
| Telephone Number          | <b>01282 455622</b>  |
| Fax Number                | <b>01282 435375</b>  |
| Email Address             | <b>office@parkhillschool.co.uk</b>   |
| Head                      | <b>Mrs Annette Robinson</b>  |
| Chair of Governors        | <b>Mrs Catherine McDermott</b>   |
| Age Range                 | <b>3 to 11</b>   |
| Total Number of Pupils    | <b>111</b>   |
| Gender of Pupils          | <b>Mixed (67 boys; 44 girls)</b>   |
| Numbers by Age            | 3-5 (EYFS): <b>34</b><br>5-11: <b>77</b>   |
| Head of EYFS Setting      | <b>Miss Charlotte Fidoe</b>  |
| EYFS Gender               | <b>Boys and Girls</b>  |
| Inspection Dates          | <b>9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016</b>   |

## PREFACE

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](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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI Interim inspection was in March 2010.

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 children aged under two), 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 members of staff and with a representative of the Sisters of Mercy, chair of governors and other members of the governing body, 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 Pam Simmonds         | Team Inspector (Former head, ISA school)                        |
| Mrs Linda Griffith       | Team Inspector (Former head, ISA school)                        |
| Mrs Anne Robinson        | Team Inspector for Early Years (Former deputy head, ISA school) |

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

- 1.1 St Joseph's Park Hill School is a co-educational Roman Catholic day school, with pupils from the ages of 3 to 11. Situated between Padiham and Burnley in Lancashire, it was founded in 1913 by the Sisters of Mercy and moved to its present site in 1957. The school educates pupils of other faiths, with around a third being Muslim. Additional buildings have been developed on the site over the years and, in 2002 a Nursery was added, expanding the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which shares the school's grounds and facilities. A new kitchen has been added since the previous inspection, enabling the school to serve hot meals at lunchtime. The school is a registered charity, the Institute of Our Lady of Mercy being its trustees. The trustees have appointed a local board of governors to oversee the school on their behalf, with some trustees also being members of the governing body.
- 1.2 The school seeks to provide its pupils with the essential skills to take their place in an ever-changing world and to build an inclusive community, where the individuality of every child is valued and they are recognised as children of God. The school aims to ensure respect, tolerance, understanding and concern for others, irrespective of faith, culture or belief, and a strong belief in the traditional values of hard work, courtesy, good behaviour, friendship and forgiveness. The school aims to provide high quality teaching and learning in an environment in which children feel happy, safe and cared for, and can enter the next phase of their education with confidence and motivation.
- 1.3 The school is divided into three sections. The Nursery caters for children from the ages of 3 to 4, the Infant department for pupils from Reception to Year 2 and the Junior department for pupils in Years 3 to 6. At the time of inspection there were 111 pupils on roll, about three-fifths of whom are boys. Of the 34 children in the EYFS, 17 attend on a part-time basis. Pupils come largely from a range of professional and business backgrounds and most come from within a 12-mile radius of the school. The majority of pupils are of British descent. Children's ability, on entry to Nursery, is in line with the national average. The ability profile of the whole school is a little above the national average overall, with a wide spread of abilities represented. The school has three pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and has identified two pupils as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan attend the school.
- 1.4 National Curriculum (NC) 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 Throughout the school, the quality of pupils' achievement and learning is excellent, arising from excellent teaching and good, broadly-based curricular and extra-curricular provision. The excellent learning and development of children of all abilities in the EYFS, provides them with a secure foundation for significant progress and achievement in the rest of the school. This is particularly evident in pupils' personal development, their success in securing a place at their chosen senior school and their sporting accomplishments. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, think independently and show initiative. The curriculum furnishes pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills to progress successfully to the next stage of their education. In the EYFS, staff have responded well to a recommendation of the previous inspection to improve the outdoor learning environment. However, planning for its use does not yet ensure that it is used by all children across all areas of learning. The curriculum makes strong provision for the pupils' academic and physical development, but provision for pupils to extend their creative, expressive and performing talents within the curriculum is less well developed. Teaching is characterised by dedication, enthusiasm, excellent collaboration between staff and well-informed planning to meet pupils' individual needs.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. The school's communication of its trustees' vision, combined with the fulfilment of its own aims, ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a significant strength throughout the school. Pupils value and appreciate the diversity within and beyond their community and develop a strong understanding of British values. Excellent pastoral care is founded on particularly positive relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves, ensuring a strong sense of community, in which mutual respect is evident, standards of behaviour are high and pupils are polite and courteous. Throughout the school, welfare, health and safety are managed carefully and close attention is paid to most aspects of safeguarding. Some inconsistency in the undertaking and recording of checks on the appointment of staff was remedied when the school was alerted to this during the inspection. Parents are extremely positive about the welfare and safety provided by the school.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management have overseen a successful response to the recommendations and regulatory requirement of the previous inspection and have strengthened their strategies for the oversight of the school. However, the monitoring of safeguarding has not been sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the trustees' responsibilities for statutory requirements have been met in relation to the checking of staff on appointment. Governors gain a good insight into the work of the school and provide effective support and challenge to its leadership which, through collaborative strategic planning, the evident motivation and development of staff and excellent relationships with parents, is successful in providing high quality teaching and learning throughout the school, and an inspiring focus on its aims and values.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to take the following action.

- Where a DBS check from a previous employer is accepted for a new member of staff, ensure that a separate barred list check is undertaken before they start work, and that for any employee of a contractor or third party, assurance is obtained from the employer that all required checks have been completed [Part 4, paragraph 18(2)(a), under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors and Part 3, paragraphs 7 (a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety of pupils].
- Ensure that, for any member of staff who undertakes teaching work, a check is made as to whether they are subject to an order prohibiting them from teaching, and that, for all such staff, the single central register shows the date on which the check was completed. [Part 4, paragraph 18(2)(b), 21(3)(b) under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors].
- Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school keep up to date in their knowledge of developments in regulatory requirements to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently [Part 8, paragraphs 34(1) (a) and (b), under Quality of leadership in and management of schools].

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Extend the provision for the pupils to develop their skills in creative and performing arts.
2. In the EYFS, refine planning to ensure that all pupils make use of the outdoor areas across all areas of learning.

### **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 This represents successful fulfilment of the school's aim to provide a happy, caring environment where success is celebrated and hard work rewarded, within a welcoming community where each child is valued as unique. Pupils strive for their best, enjoying the competition with their peers, leading to intellectual independence.
- 3.3 Children's achievement in the EYFS is excellent in relation to their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics; progress for all groups of children is at least good and often excellent in relation to the average for those with similar ability, as seen in their profile scores at the end of Reception. Those with delayed or poor English language or SEND make good progress, due to the strong support they receive. The children's high levels of achievement are confirmed by their responses in discussions and their contribution to lessons, together with photographic records and other documentation of their work. Children have positive attitudes to their work and show excellent initiative, for example, when tidying up or self-selecting activities and pursuing their own academic and creative interests.
- 3.4 Children in the EYFS maintain high levels of engagement, motivation and independent thinking due to the adults' strong focus on their differing characteristics of learning. They develop their language, number and physical skills rapidly. They display deep concentration, ask relevant questions and can readily recall information. They make clear links between previous and new learning. In the pre-inspection questionnaire almost all parents in the EYFS indicated that they are pleased with the progress made by their children.
- 3.5 The achievement of pupils of all abilities and needs is excellent throughout the school. Their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are of a high level, relative to their ages. Pupils exhibit maturity in logical thought, the application of mathematics and physical activity. Stimulating challenge for the most able pupils, as observed, for example, in a mathematics lesson for older pupils, promotes high levels of achievement. Pupils in Year 6 excel in national speaking examinations and have achieved gold awards in a national mathematics challenge. Pupils develop effective information, communication and technology (ICT) skills and use them to complement and enhance their work across the curriculum.
- 3.6 Pupils consistently gain a place at their chosen secondary school. The most able are successful in gaining entry to selective secondary schools and achieving scholarships at independent senior schools. Those with SEND achieve creditable standards in relation to their needs and their peers.
- 3.7 Achievement in extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils enjoy success in instrumental music examinations and the choir regularly participates in a collaborative concert for local schools. Pupils' keen competitive spirit ensures sporting success in many local competitions and regional and national tournaments, notably recently in netball and athletics. Abundant self-motivation is evident, for example, in the calligraphy and craft clubs, where there was a strong desire to achieve better results.

- 3.8 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. The results in national tests at age 11 have been excellent in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. Pupils regularly exceed expectations. This level of attainment, together with the evidence drawn from lesson observation, discussion with pupils, scrutiny of their work and the school's own data, indicates that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and relative to the average for pupils of similar ability, as shown by standardised measures of progress.
- 3.9 Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They involve themselves enthusiastically in a wide range of activities, especially sports at team and individual level. They think independently and show initiative, for example in games sessions, where older pupils train as sports coaches to the younger pupils. They respond wholeheartedly to the challenge of initiating imaginative tasks and activities for the younger children to perform. Those with SEND show strong levels of perseverance and effort, gaining confidence from the support they receive. Pupils are well-mannered, confident and articulate and have a tremendous pride in their school.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.11 The broad and balanced curriculum covers all National Curriculum subjects, together with Spanish from Nursery onwards, with the benefit of a native speaker. It is suitable for all ages and abilities and supports the school's aim to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for pupils to enter the next stage of their education with confidence and motivation.
- 3.12 The excellent and stimulating EYFS curriculum is wide-ranging and facilitates the attainment of high standards in relation to the age, ability and needs of the children. It is particularly successful in promoting mutual respect and tolerance of those with different cultures, faiths and beliefs. It includes a strong emphasis on the use of language and listening with concentration, and benefits from the specialisms of staff in speech and language and the use of sign language.
- 3.13 The school has responded well to the recommendation at the previous inspection to ensure that children in Reception have more planned opportunities to extend their learning in the outdoor environment. It now provides particularly well for outdoor learning and exploring. A recently resurfaced outdoor area was in almost constant use during the inspection and a further adjacent field, including a mud kitchen, is now a focus for further development. However, these outdoor areas are not yet fully used by all children across all areas of learning.
- 3.14 A recommendation from the previous inspection to adopt a consistent approach to curriculum planning across the school has been fully implemented. The school now has clear curriculum maps and long and medium term plans, easily accessible by all staff. Curricular provision enables pupils to learn to appreciate British values such as democracy and the rule of law through its elections for positions of responsibility and a visit by local magistrates, who offer insight into the English legal system. Any presentation of political views is balanced.
- 3.15 The school receives strong support from a sports partnership for schools, which provides specialist coaching in a broad range of sports and dance activities. This enables pupils to develop their physical skills. However, provision for pupils to

extend their creative, expressive and performing talents within the curriculum is less well developed. Music lessons incorporate singing, recorder and keyboard. Art is delivered as part of a carousel of non-core subjects but the range of options, and the provision to develop skills to a high level are limited, both within the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities.

- 3.16 Well-resourced classrooms include attractive displays of pupils' work and stimulating curriculum support, such as posters displaying exciting adjectives to use in writing. Interactive whiteboards and laptops for ICT and other subjects enable pupils to develop their ICT skills. A well-stocked library has recently been updated. The curriculum strongly promotes pupils' personal development through its detailed provision for PSHE, which includes 'reflection' lessons which encourage them to develop their thinking and reasoning skills.
- 3.17 The school makes good provision for more able pupils, planning to provide challenge with extension work in class and opportunity to attend special events such as an able writers' day. Those talented in sport can train as county sports ambassadors and compete in local and regional competitions. Assemblies, concerts and plays throughout the year provide performance occasions for those talented in music and drama.
- 3.18 Pupils with SEND benefit from individual support. Their personalised plans are discussed with parents and reviewed regularly. Effective management of SEND provision ensures close liaison and support for classroom staff and additional support in class. The small number of pupils with EAL also receive suitable support in class.
- 3.19 Extra-curricular activities enable pupils to develop their interests and talents; many pupils compete in local sports competitions. Individual instrumental lessons are available for brass, violin and guitar and older pupils can join a lunchtime brass group. A comprehensive programme of museum and theatre visits, a residential outdoor pursuits trip for Years 5 and 6, and special celebrations in school, such as Chinese New Year, further enhance the curriculum. Recent visitors to the school to support curriculum topics, including a dental technician and a theatre group, enhance pupils' understanding.
- 3.20 Pupils develop an in-depth appreciation of the wider world through links with the community, including charity events and a local women's refuge. The choir sings at a local home for the elderly and Years 5 and 6 take part in a mock trial at the magistrates' court. The visit of British Legion veterans for the Remembrance Day service strengthens pupils' understanding of their heritage.

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

- 3.21 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.22 Teaching demonstrates extremely thorough knowledge of the pupils and is highly effective in promoting their progress across the school. It benefits from the dedicated help of support assistants in meeting the school's aim to provide high quality teaching and learning for all children.
- 3.23 The excellent teaching in the EYFS is characterised by dedication and enthusiasm, inspiring children to do their best. Staff have high expectations of the children, know them extremely well and adapt teaching to meet their differing needs, using observation and assessment efficiently to ensure that children access all areas of

learning. Excellent, collaborative planning, both long and short term, ensures significant progress in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Good quality, imaginatively-used resources, easily accessible for the children, enable them to develop their independence and broaden the choices available. Generous staffing ratios, particularly in Nursery, provide a safe and well-supervised facility, ensuring individual attention according to children's needs.

- 3.24 Throughout the school, well-planned teaching takes careful account of individual pupils' learning needs. The recommendation from the previous inspection to ensure that tasks within lessons are closely matched to pupils' needs has been addressed successfully. The school has also responded successfully to the recommendations of the previous inspection to ensure that lessons are formally monitored. Effective planning and the effective contribution of learning assistants enable pupils of all abilities, including those with individual needs, to have focused support and challenge in their learning. This was evident in most lessons. Pupils identified as needing extra support benefit from teaching which is focused on their individual targets, drawn up by the learning support department in discussion with teaching staff. Their learning is further supported through the sharing of these targets with parents and their regular review to ensure continuing progress and the pupils' increasing independence.
- 3.25 Teaching shows great enthusiasm, high levels of subject knowledge and excellent time management within lessons, ensuring that pupils' interest and focus are maintained throughout. Marking is regular and, in frequent examples of best practice, includes constructive comments, which show pupils what they need to do to improve. An effective system for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress as they move through the school informs planning, which takes due account of the needs of individual pupils, enabling all to make excellent progress.
- 3.26 Teachers use a wide range of learning activities and resources to very good effect. Interactive whiteboards are used well to help maintain the pupils' focus and interest. The most successful teaching encourages children to ask questions, think for themselves and assess their own and each other's work in tasks well matched to their ability. Such teaching motivates pupils to learn quickly. In the small number of lessons where teaching was less successful, work was not well matched to the ability of some pupils, thus limiting their progress.
- 3.27 Teaching creates an environment in which pupils are confident to ask questions and give their opinions, thus fostering interest and independence. Pupils' assiduity is strongly promoted through the praise and celebration of hard work, endeavour and success via a reward system, based on house points and special awards, which are greatly appreciated by the pupils.
- 3.28 Teaching strongly promotes tolerance and respect through the strong focus on the school's Christian ethos and values, which are reinforced in assemblies, services and religious education (RE) lessons. Due care is taken to ensure that any coverage of political issues, should it take place, is non-partisan. For example, candidates from all the main parties visited the school at the last general election.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Inspired by the vision of the founder of the Institute of Our Lady of Mercy to 'make mercy the business of our lives', the school ensures that mercy inspires its values and underpins its community life. This facilitates a calm, reflective environment, in which pupils are respectful to one another, the staff and themselves, fulfilling the aim of the school to enable respect, tolerance, understanding and concern for others, irrespective of faith, culture or belief. Through the inspiration of the school's aims, they come to understand the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.
- 4.3 The ethos of mercy and the school's values pervade activities in the EYFS, ensuring an environment where children readily co-operate, share and are respectful. It enables the children to develop spiritually and acquire an appreciation of their own and others' faiths, cultures and beliefs. The promotion and understanding of fundamental British values in the EYFS are evident in an inclusive community where all are valued. Children demonstrate a high degree of empathy and social awareness and are excellently prepared for the next stage of their education. From an early age the children learn about co-operation; they can explain clearly in Nursery the difference between sharing and selfishness. Children's confidence in making choices develops strongly and they steadily absorb British values, such as respect and tolerance.
- 4.4 Pupils develop strong spiritual awareness, for example, through events such as the Ash Wednesday mass, celebrated during the inspection. They acquire a deep appreciation of their own and others' faiths, cultures and beliefs through a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and RE. Reflection time for all pupils furnishes them with a strong ability to empathise with others. Prominent displays of pupils' work on Christian values, such as sharing, kindness, love, sacrifice and joy and weekly assemblies, led by year groups in turn, enable pupils to develop their sense of spirituality and their self-esteem. Older pupils demonstrate quiet confidence and grace in contributing readings.
- 4.5 Pupils have highly-developed moral awareness. They demonstrate a mature sense of right and wrong, evident in their daily behaviour around school. They fully understand the reasons for the school rules and this forms the foundation for their respect for the civil and criminal law of England. They are happy to undertake tasks for the good of the school community. Pupils' sense of moral and ethical values is seen in their keen understanding of environmental issues; they see how they can make a difference through the school's ecological council. Their moral awareness is further developed through visits to places such as the magistrates' court and a Mosque and through the discussion of moral issues, for example in geography and history lessons.
- 4.6 Pupils have a mature sense of social awareness. They articulate their ideas clearly and discuss personal concerns and interests. They have a good awareness of world events, even in the youngest classes, as noted in a lesson about the rainforest, when concerns were shared about the effects of logging on the environment. Pupils readily take on leadership responsibilities and contribute to the life of the school. Older pupils display a mature and responsible attitude towards the younger pupils,

who treat them with high regard. Through their charitable fundraising, pupils show concern for those less fortunate than themselves and demonstrate how they can contribute to the wider community. Through the curriculum, pupils gain a sense of the responsibilities of citizenship and the importance of individual liberty and learn to respect others, regardless of any individual characteristics or disabilities. Visitors to the school, such as the police and fire service, and educational visits reinforce pupils' understanding of public institutions and services in England.

- 4.7 Pupils exhibit broad cultural awareness. They learn about other faiths during a focused 'world religions week' and this results in secure appreciation. They engage in creative, artistic and performance activities which, alongside educational visits to museums and theatres, strongly develop their understanding of their own culture. Through various aspects of the curriculum, as well as school trips, visitors to the school, and the sharing of their own different cultural experiences, pupils gain a clear appreciation of other cultures and practices, a recent example being their participation in Chinese lion dancing.
- 4.8 By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate an excellent level of personal development, including strong skills in leadership, initiative and responsibility, honed through various aspects of school life.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 Staff know their pupils extremely well and provide highly effective support and guidance, in accordance with the school's aim to provide an environment where children are highly respectful of each other, to the staff and to themselves.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, the key person role has a particularly strong and positive influence on the children's pastoral care; identified staff have an in-depth knowledge of the children. All EYFS staff involve the children actively in solving their conflicts and problems. Children are sensitive to the feelings of others. Relationships between staff and children are respectful and warm, both in and out of class. An effective behaviour policy, with reward ladders for positive behaviour and a graduated set of sanctions, is implemented consistently by staff and clearly understood by the children, successfully ensuring high standards of conduct. Children are successfully encouraged to develop an understanding of keeping healthy and enjoy the healthy food provided at snack times. Children are encouraged to listen to their hearts and breathing during physical education lessons.
- 4.12 There is a pervasive atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and pupils and between pupils of all ages in the school, which enables pupils to grow in confidence within the secure community ambience of the school. Older pupils organise activities for younger pupils at break and teams in house events, thus learning to take responsibility and helping younger pupils to have fun during playtime.
- 4.13 All pupils take part in regular physical exercise and a good variety of healthy options is offered at lunch, enabling pupils to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Understanding of the importance of healthy eating is also promoted through the PSHE programme.
- 4.14 Pupils' high standards of courtesy and conduct reflect the school's success in promoting good behaviour. A system of sanctions, understood by the pupils and implemented consistently, is displayed in classrooms. Teachers are sensitive to the

need to take into account any related difficulty or disability when deciding on appropriate disciplinary action. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all pupils felt that teachers are fair with rewards and almost all thought they were fair with sanctions. A no-tolerance policy is effective in preventing and tackling bullying and the school takes appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of cyber-bullying. Clear guidelines are displayed around the school and regularly discussed in PSHE lessons. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire all pupils agreed that the school deals well with any bullying that occurs and, during discussion, they confirmed that such incidences are rare and are dealt with quickly. The school maintains detailed records, which are carefully analysed.

- 4.15 The school has a good plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, including clear timescales.
- 4.16 Pupils have appropriate opportunities to express their views. Currently there is no school council, but pupils seek election to the ecological council and also make suggestions at house meetings and during class discussions in RE and PSHE lessons. Their ideas are also welcomed when organising school charity fund raising events.

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

- 4.17 The quality of welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.18 Staff in the EYFS are vigilant in their care of the children, extremely sensitive to their individual needs and ensure they are kept safe, including from radicalisation. Children with particular needs are fully recognised by key people and class teachers, through detailed personal learning journeys, which accompany them during their time in the EYFS, a summary of which is passed on to the next class teacher, to ensure continuity in care.
- 4.19 Throughout the school, staff ensure an environment in which welfare, health and safety are managed carefully. Close attention is paid to most aspects of the pupils' safeguarding. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding, including those with specific responsibilities, and in obligations to guard against radicalisation; they exhibit a clear understanding of routines to ensure that the pupils are safeguarded. Staff receive and read the required safeguarding documentation. The school has useful local links with other agencies involved in safeguarding. However, practice has been inconsistent in undertaking and recording the required checks on the appointment of staff, in particular checks on contractors, checks against the barred list and the list of those prohibited from teaching. Such matters were remedied promptly when the school was alerted to them during the inspection; before the end of the inspection, no staff remained unchecked. Inspectors identified several administrative errors in the recording of appointment checks, which were also rectified promptly.
- 4.20 Parents are extremely positive about the welfare and safety provided by the school. All those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, noted that their child is happy and feels safe and also that their child is well looked after at school. Pupils are also very positive about their safety at school and those who undertook the pre-inspection questionnaire commented overwhelmingly that they like being at the school.
- 4.21 Measures to limit the risk of fire and other hazards are thorough. The school responds appropriately to any action points arising from fire risk assessment.

Emergency evacuation drills are undertaken and recorded regularly and any matters arising are attended to without delay. Fire prevention and protection equipment is tested and serviced in accordance with required schedules. The testing of electrical appliances and of the water supply is undertaken by external specialists in accordance with appropriate schedules and staff exercise due care in the use and storage of chemicals.

- 4.22 Well-equipped facilities provide for pupils who are injured or ill and those with SEND. Medication is stored securely and administered with due care. A high proportion of staff are qualified in first aid. Detailed procedures relating to first aid, accidents, medication and any pupils with individual medical needs all ensure a high standard of care and prompt communication with parents.
- 4.23 Admission and attendance registers are completed in accordance with requirements and, throughout the school, staff promote regular attendance and monitor absence carefully.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Governors are appointed by the trustees, with due regard for the recommendations of the school's leadership, and are charged with the oversight of the school. They employ a good range of approaches, designed to establish a clear oversight of the work of the school, including the EYFS. In response to a recommendation at the previous inspection, governors have developed a framework which enables them to monitor the school. In most respects this is successful; through their visits to the school, attendance at events, observation of lessons and receipt of reports from governors' committees and the school's leadership and staff, governors demonstrate a clear understanding of the life of the school and the work and progress of its pupils in both curricular and extra-curricular pursuits. Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise to the school, including in education and health and safety. Their oversight and monitoring of safeguarding includes a termly safeguarding review. However, their understanding has not been sufficiently detailed and their measures not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the trustees' responsibilities for statutory requirements have been met effectively in relation to undertaking and recording checks on staff on appointment, resulting in a small number of checks not being completed prior to appointment and subsequently rectified.
- 5.3 Governors gain a good insight into the work of the school and provide effective support and challenge. Through their finance committee and assistance from the trustees' accountancy department, the school receives detailed support in financial planning and investment. Since the previous inspection, support from the trustees in premises development has enabled the installation of improved lighting and the development of a kitchen to provide hot midday meals. Annual education events, organised by the trustees for educational institutions in their care, facilitate good support and challenge for staff and governors, with particular reference to the trust's aims and values.
- 5.4 Members of the governing body have undertaken training pertinent to their roles, including in safeguarding and guarding against radicalisation. Expertise in health and safety, for example, has facilitated the discharging of the trustees' responsibilities in fire safety and risk assessment. Expert support from governance in cultural diversity has enabled the school to ensure comprehensive participation in its activities founded in its Roman Catholic ethos by pupils and their families from other faiths and backgrounds.

### **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 At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management of the school are highly effective in accordance with the aim to provide high quality teaching and learning for all the children. Values which encourage respect for others and a strong Christian ethos are embedded and evident in the meaningful displays throughout the

school. The close liaison between staff, both formally and informally, ensures the continuity of education and successful transition through the school.

- 5.7 The EYFS leadership demonstrates ambitious vision and has developed the setting well since the previous inspection and set a clear direction for future improvement. Staff are fully conversant with the statutory framework and ensure a welcoming and stimulating environment. They benefit from regular supervision meetings to facilitate well-focused continuous professional development and local authority support in staff training and in monitoring the children's progress. Following a recommendation at the previous inspection, staff have established a systematic method of monitoring and updating policies and procedures effectively. Rigorous self-evaluation ensures that they become embedded in practice in the setting. Detailed monitoring of collaborative planning ensures coverage of all areas of learning. Together with careful record-keeping, this helps children make at least good progress towards their Early Learning Goals. Information from such records is used astutely when planning for the individual needs of all children.
- 5.8 Throughout the school, leadership and management, strongly supported by the staff, discharge their responsibilities diligently, aware of the significance and importance of the correct implementation of policies. Leadership maintains close contact with the whole school, greeting the school community every morning and sustains a friendly and supportive presence throughout the school. Ideas generated by the teaching team are shared widely in weekly staff meetings. Staff are very appreciative of the dedicated and caring leadership style, which percolates through the whole school. This, in turn, motivates the industrious staff to support the school wholeheartedly and one another to an extraordinary degree.
- 5.9 The leadership team has worked assiduously in formulating a strategic plan through discussions with staff. This provides clear educational direction and prioritises school development. It is reflected in the high quality of the education provided. The carefully devised plan assists management and staff in identifying areas of development and addressing them in a timely manner. A clear commitment to improve areas of the school is evident in the detailed fulfilment of the recommendations of the previous inspection. Through in-house professional development, the recent focus on the English curriculum has had a notable impact. It has raised levels of staff expertise and confidence, thus improving the quality of learning and achievement for the pupils.
- 5.10 Since the previous inspection, the implementation of a more rigorous professional development policy has enabled staff to seek out appropriate training, either internally or from external agencies, further contributing to an improvement in teachers' confidence. Leadership is highly effective in regularly monitoring and observing teaching, in the scrutiny of work, the sharing of good practice and in conducting the annual appraisal of staff. The school's leadership is appraised by governors. Such monitoring is successful in facilitating the continuing development of teaching methods and practice and sustaining the high standards of pastoral care. Staff are highly effective in self-evaluation, through well-structured procedures within the school's monitoring policy. This enables the careful setting of priorities and ensures that they are achieved within a set framework.
- 5.11 Leadership is successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high quality staff at all levels. They are well qualified for their roles. Oversight of the curriculum is successfully maintained through perceptive curriculum leadership; the management of subject areas is devolved to specific teaching staff,

who conscientiously take responsibility for at least one curriculum area, taking note of external developments and pursuing improvement. The school has reviewed its procedures for formative assessment and introduced new systems for assessing and tracking progress, which are having a beneficial effect on the pupils' achievement.

- 5.12 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed very positive views about the school and its leadership, most saying that the school is well led and managed and that they would recommend the school to other parents.
- 5.13 Leadership ensures that the school's well-defined safeguarding policies and protocols are known and understood by all associated with the school. However, in the monitoring of staff appointment checks and how they are recorded, leadership has not fully ensured consistency in meeting statutory requirements. At all levels, management ensures an environment in which staff are appropriately trained in welfare health and safety and the pupils feel safe and secure.
- 5.14 The school's excellent links with its parents, carers and guardians are reflected in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, which show that parents are overwhelmingly pleased with the education and support provided for their children. Positive and constructive relationships with parents are evident throughout the school, fulfilling its aim to provide a welcoming community where each child is valued as unique and each family is appreciated.
- 5.15 Parents of children in the EYFS can view an abundance of information about their child's school life and progress every day, and have an excellent range of documentation and workshops, to enable them to engage in their children's learning and progress, both at school and home. Appropriate interventions, involving external agencies, can be arranged for those children who need them.
- 5.16 In order to meet a regulatory requirement, noted at the previous inspection the setting now provides parents with a written summary, reporting their child's progress against the statutory assessment scales in the final term in the EYFS.
- 5.17 Throughout the school, parents are encouraged to be regularly involved, through consultation evenings and curriculum workshops. Communication has been further improved through the introduction of an electronic system for issuing regular information. Additionally, a fortnightly newsletter details pupil successes, forthcoming events and notices from the staff.
- 5.18 Parents welcome and appreciate the flexible access to class teachers before and after school and the opportunities to raise matters of concern. The Friday family assemblies give parents the opportunity to participate in the religious celebrations, sensitively portrayed by each year group in turn and they are appreciative that the staff are available for discussion following the assembly. A parent-teacher association gives further opportunities for parents to be involved with the life of the school, through social and fundraising events.
- 5.19 Prior to, and on joining the school, parents are provided with clear and relevant information on policies, protocols and practical aspects of the school community, detailing the school's expectations and the strong partnership between home and school. Regular reports and parents' evenings enable parents to discuss the work and progress of their child. The written reports detail achievement, progress, effort and next steps in learning. Transition evenings, held in the summer term, inform parents of the expectations and routines in the year ahead. In their pre-inspection

questionnaire responses and through interviews, parents expressed great satisfaction with the frequency and quality of information provided about the school, its events and activities and their own children.

- 5.20 The school deals with any parental concerns with care and sensitivity and handles complaints according to its published procedures.

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