



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ST PIUS X PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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St Pius X Preparatory School

Full Name of School	St Pius X Preparatory School		
DfE Number	888/6004		
EYFS Number	EY310513		
Registered Charity Number	526609		
Address	St Pius X Preparatory School 200 Garstang Road Fulwood Preston Lancashire PR2 8RD England		
Telephone Number	01772 719937		
Fax Number	01772 787535		
Email Address	enquiries@st-piusx.lancs.sch.uk		
Head	Miss Bridgeen Banks		
Age Range	2 to 11		
Total Number of Pupils	263		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed		
Numbers by Age	2-5: (EYFS)	129	5-11: 134
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	263	
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Gill Moss		
Inspection Dates	09 to 12 Feb 2016		

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. 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 EYFS inspection was in March 2013 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in February 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 senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and four other governors, 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

Dr Joe Tierney

Reporting Inspector

Miss Pat Griffin

Inspector for Early Years

Mr Robert Francis

Team Inspector (Head IAPS school)

Mr Mick Jonas

Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Pius X is a preparatory school for boys and girls aged 2 to 11 years. It is located a few miles north of Preston town centre and stands on a four-acre site. The original school building is a Victorian property which houses the Reception class and Years 1 to 2, as well as the school's offices. The Nursery is adjacent to this building and houses most of the pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Pupils in the main school (Years 1 to 6) are taught in a separate modern block and in the Victorian building.
- 1.2 The school was formed in 1955 by a group of local businessmen and is owned by CPS (Preston) and run as a not-for-profit charitable trust with a board of governors. The main board is supported in its work by committees covering business operations, education and staffing, finance, and property and grounds.
- 1.3 The school aims to educate the whole person to their full potential, to encourage interaction between home and school, to pass on knowledge and understanding of the Roman Catholic faith, to encourage pupils to be caring, courteous and disciplined, and to ensure every pupil participates fully in appropriate activities, so that they become aware of their Christian responsibilities to society.
- 1.4 The pupils reflect the wide ethnic mix in the locality. Around one in four are white British, with the rest being mainly of Asian origin. One in three pupils is Christian, mainly Roman Catholic, with the remainder being largely Muslim, Hindu or Sikh. Three pupils in the main school and 13 in the EYFS have English as an additional language (EAL) and all receive support.
- 1.5 The pupils have an ability which is above the national average, with most being above average and about one-fifth being well above average. Most pupils come from the immediate locality, with parents having a professional background, many working in the field of medicine.
- 1.6 At the time of the inspection there were 263 pupils in the school, with 129 in the EYFS. Fourteen pupils in the main school and seven in the EYFS have been identified as having some form of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and all receive support in the school. Two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.7 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 St Pius X is a successful school which meets its principal aims. Children in the EYFS achieve extremely well. They make good progress and reach at least the developmental levels typically expected for their age. In the main school (Years 1 to 6) pupils achieve high standards in numeracy and literacy and can use these skills to access the rest of the curriculum. Attainment in national tests at the ages of seven and eleven is well above the national average for maintained schools. The pupils make good progress because of their strong attitudes to work, keenness to learn, and the effective teaching they receive. The more able and those with SEND or EAL are supported very well, in and out of the classroom. Teaching in the main school is good overall, with individual lessons varying from satisfactory to excellent. At its best it is enthusiastic, uses skilful questioning, is well-paced and motivates the pupils. Pupils take pride in their work, which is often well presented. It is regularly marked, but some comments do not indicate where and how pupils can improve. However, there are some excellent examples of marking and teaching. Teaching in the EYFS is enthusiastic, creative, and energetic, so cultivating highly positive attitudes to learning and contributing to high levels of achievement. Children in the EYFS have highly appropriate educational programmes covering the seven areas of learning extremely well. The curriculum in the main school offers pupils a good range of experiences, both inside the classroom and beyond, but pupils have too little time to learn history and geography.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent. There are excellent pastoral systems in place to promote good behaviour. In the EYFS, staff are committed to providing an extremely happy, caring and purposeful environment, built on mutual trust and respect. Across the school, procedures to prevent bullying are strong. This results in very positive relationships between pupils who are kind and considerate towards others. British values of tolerance and understanding are central to the school's ethos and pupils from different religious backgrounds respect the beliefs and values of others. Pupils know what is right and wrong; they are polite and courteous. Pupils have excellent spiritual awareness and, whilst there is a focus upon the Catholic faith and Christian teachings, children of different faiths view these as common values relevant to all members of the school society. They develop a strong awareness of a multi-cultural society.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are good. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety are secure although not all details relating to the safeguarding policy were up-to-date at the start of the inspection. They were corrected during the inspection. Governors have secured good accommodation and resources for the school; levels of teaching and support staff are high. The senior leadership's emphasis on pupils' personal development results in excellent personal outcomes for pupils. Planning and monitoring of the school's work are good, although not enough has been done on producing smarter plans and developing the role of the subject co-ordinator. In the EYFS, leadership and management provide clear and ambitious educational direction. Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent and most parents expressed satisfaction with the school. They have very good opportunities to be involved and the school communicates with them very well. The school has made good progress on all matters raised at the previous inspections in 2010 and 2013, although in some, work is still in progress.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Continue to disseminate the best practice in the school, particularly in teaching, marking and planning.
2. Improve the role of the subject co-ordinator by giving them job descriptions and ensure the impact of their work is monitored.
3. Improve the quality of some development planning by keeping plans up-to-date, sharply focused and ambitious.
4. Increase the time available for the teaching history and geography in Years 3 to 6.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning is good.
- 3.2 All pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to educate the whole person.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS achieve extremely well. They make good progress in their learning and development relative to their individual starting points, abilities and needs. All children reach at least the developmental levels typically expected for their age. At the end of Reception all children reach the Early Learning Goals set for this age group, and some exceed them. Children with SEND or EAL, and most of the more able, also make good progress because of the individual support they are given. The youngest children are beginning to communicate effectively, as seen in their play in the café and grocery shop, where excellent language was being demonstrated by staff. They enjoy and participate well in action songs and rhymes, and are becoming active and enthusiastic learners. Children listen attentively and older ones are developing an excellent knowledge of the sounds that letters make, which they apply to their reading and independent writing. They can work with numbers to 20 and beyond, and can add and subtract accurately. Children are highly creative, as seen in the vibrant artwork on display, and are becoming increasingly skilled in their use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- 3.4 In the main school, standards of numeracy are good and are high by the time pupils reach Year 6. Pupils are particularly adept at the basic skills of number, but can also deal effectively with shape, space and aspects of statistics, such as probability. They are very comfortable when working with numbers and can apply their skills when needed.
- 3.5 Pupils' standards in reading and writing are also high, with some excellent examples of creative and discursive writing seen. Pupils read with confidence, for example in a school assembly. Standards of presentation of written work are good, with pupils taking a pride in their work. In lessons, pupils listen well and many are articulate and confident when responding to the teacher.
- 3.6 Pupils' scientific skills are good. They have a clear understanding of a fair test and show very good levels of understanding of the work covered. They are able to investigate scientific ideas and confidently explain their findings. Pupils are particularly comfortable when using ICT. They showed a mastery of skills when designing posters and used tablet computers with confidence when making a music video. Pupils' skills in design and technology are developing as this has just been introduced into the curriculum. Not much work in art was on display and opportunities for pupils to develop geographical and historical skills are restricted by the limited time available in the curriculum.
- 3.7 Beyond the school there have been successes in athletics and swimming at national tournaments. The netball team has performed well in competitions for independent schools and pupils have achieved well in a mathematical challenge and a codebreaking competition. Year 6 children performed Macbeth at a local theatre and a significant number of music and singing exams have been successfully taken this year.

- 3.8 The following analysis uses results the national data from the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at the age of seven have been well above the national average for maintained primary schools. Reading results in 2014 were exceptional, as were results in writing and mathematics in 2013.
- 3.9 Results in national tests at the age of eleven have been well above the national average for maintained primary schools. Results have shown a decline from well above average in 2013 to above average in 2014. However, results in the separate components in 2014 were more diverse, with reading and writing results being above average, but mathematics results being exceptional.
- 3.10 The school places much emphasis on pupils gaining entry to grammar schools and other independent schools. Whilst this can lead to much testing, nevertheless, the pupils have considerable success in this area. Most pupils leaving from Year 6 go on to independent senior schools or maintained grammar schools.
- 3.11 These results, together with observation in lessons, scrutiny of the pupils' work, examination of the school's own data and discussions with pupils show that most of them make good progress, including those with SEND, EAL and the able. This is because of the good teaching by class teachers and the support received outside the classroom.
- 3.12 Pupils have a very positive attitude to work. In almost all lessons they stick to the task and work well with their peers. They co-operate with each other when working in small groups and are always happy to help their friends. They listen well, both to their teachers and their peers, and are keen to answer questions in class.

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

- 3.13 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.14 In the EYFS highly appropriate educational programmes cover the seven areas of learning extremely well. Consistently high standards are achieved through the varied, interesting and challenging curriculum provided, which help all children to reach, and in some cases exceed, appropriate levels of development. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities provided, both inside and outdoors. This therefore meets the recommendations made in the standard inspection in 2010 and the intermediate EYFS inspection in 2013. The curriculum is further enhanced by specialist teaching in music, ICT and French. All children who are able, who have SEND or EAL, get a particularly good start to their education because committed staff focus on their individual needs by providing extra support or resources, and working closely with their families. Meetings between staff in the EYFS and Year 1 ensures a seamless transfer.
- 3.15 The curriculum in the main school supports the school's aim to equip pupils with an academic and social education in a Roman Catholic environment which will enable them to achieve their full potential. The curriculum is generally effective in its coverage of the requisite areas of learning and is enhanced by the provision of a modern foreign language from the Reception class.
- 3.16 The main school's provision for the curriculum is mainly class-based, with subjects taught by the class teacher. Grouping of pupils into classes by prior attainment takes place in mathematics, English and verbal reasoning. Pupils also benefit from being taught music, games, physical education, French, and then in Year 6 Spanish,

by specialist teachers. Emphasis is placed on English and mathematics which provides a strong foundation for pupils' learning to develop well across the rest of the curriculum. The school's curriculum does not undermine notions of Britishness. The provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) is excellent. The school has recently introduced a new scheme and the coverage of topics is comprehensive with units to be revisited every two years. Religious education (RE) plays a prominent part in the curriculum with two hour-long lessons per week and regular assemblies and liturgies. The topics covered in PSHEE and RE contribute strongly to the pupils' personal development.

- 3.17 The recent initiative to develop the creative curriculum has seen design and technology and Spanish added to the curriculum, and the provision for mathematics, ICT and verbal reasoning extended. The improved opportunities to use ICT to support learning meet the recommendation from the standard inspection in 2010. However, the time allocated to history and geography in Years 3 to 6 is equivalent to only 30 minutes per week, and a paucity of pupils' work was noted by inspectors in these subjects.
- 3.18 In the main school, planning and review of the curriculum are good, ensuring it is suitable for, and accessible by, all pupils. Monitoring of the curriculum is the subject of much present focus. Pupils with SEND are well provided for; they are mostly supported by class teachers, but a small number are withdrawn in small groups by a specialist teacher. Recent improved provision for able pupils or those identified as having particular gifts and talents has been put in place, but the school acknowledges that there is further work to be done. Although at an early stage of development, this tackles the recommendation made in the 2010 standard inspection. Pupils find their school planner and diary helpful. The curriculum is supported by a good range of resources, including enhanced ICT equipment, although, as at the time of the 2010 inspection, the library is not extensively and always appropriately used. However, the forthcoming relocation of the library is intended to provide greater opportunities for pupils.
- 3.19 The curriculum is enhanced by a range of educational visits and enrichment activities that develop the pupils' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the world in which they live. These include visits to the theatre, museums and other places of historic interest, as well as day trips to outdoor education centres and an annual residential trip for older pupils. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about a recent visit to the Houses of Parliament where they met their local MP.
- 3.20 Regular sporting fixtures take place, with pupils attending IAPS athletics events and the school hosting tournaments in rounders and netball. Other sports including tennis and football are catered for in a good range of extra-curricular activities, as well as opportunities in areas such as music, dance, cookery and Spanish. In addition, pupils participate regularly in a number of events in the local community, such as carol singing at the Carmelite Convent and other venues, poetry recitations and charity events.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.21 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.22 Teaching in the EYFS is enthusiastic, creative, and energetic, so cultivating highly positive attitudes to learning and contributing to high levels of achievement. All adults are extremely knowledgeable about how young children learn and what they can achieve. They have high expectations for all children. They provide rich and stimulating learning environments, both indoors and outside, with an excellent variety of carefully planned activities, adapted to the children's interest, so that all children, from the youngest upwards, are able to explore and investigate independently and develop their thinking, problem-solving skills and imagination. The setting has improved the consistency of practice, as recommended in the intermediate inspection of 2013. There are many opportunities for the children to take appropriate risks, as was seen when the Nursery children were 'walking the plank'. Many high-quality resources are available to extend the children's learning. Teaching engages and motivates the children to be inquisitive learners. In Reception, excellent learning opportunities and challenges have been created by the use of a continuing imaginative tale. Detailed planning, regular pertinent observations, assessments, and accurate identification of children's next steps, ensure all children make good, and sometimes rapid, progress. They are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- 3.23 Teaching in the main school is good. It enables pupils to progress in accordance with the school's aims. The quality of teaching is underpinned by rigorous and effective planning, purposeful organisation and strong subject knowledge. Where progress is particularly good, enthusiasm, skilful questioning and well-paced and varied delivery spark industry, endeavour and interest in the pupils. For example, excellent higher-order questioning was used in a Year 4 RE lesson to encourage children to demonstrate fully their understanding of the relevance of Jesus' teachings to the modern world.
- 3.24 Teachers have a clear awareness of pupils' needs and abilities, and use this to inform planning and so enable pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Pupils with SEND benefit from the small classes and the fact that teachers use their individual education plans to check that effective strategies are being employed. Pupils with EAL also have their needs met because of effective class teaching. Most teaching also meets the needs of more able pupils by providing work that challenges them at an appropriate level. Informal assessment in the form of apt and judicious questioning enables the teacher to reinforce as necessary, or move on to the next stage of the lesson. A good mix of collaborative and independent work is encouraged. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson pupils were encouraged to think independently and apply their mathematical knowledge of triangles to create other two-dimensional shapes.
- 3.25 In isolated cases the pace of teaching was too slow and the work was too teacher-directed; teaching did not check whether pupils were, in fact, making appropriate progress. In a few lessons, a lack of challenge for the more able pupils was apparent and a mismatch between planning and expectations held pupils back.
- 3.26 Teaching does not undermine fundamental British values, is not partisan and is even-handed in presenting balanced viewpoints, enabling pupils to voice their opinions in an inclusive manner, and promoting care and concern for others.

- 3.27 The classrooms provide pupils with stimulating, bright, well-organised spaces, with a good range of accessible resources. In many areas teachers have skilfully created supportive environments in which pupils can achieve strongly and develop their skills effectively. Teachers make good use of ICT to enhance to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are available in some classes, but are not always used effectively. Whilst displays around the school and in classrooms are stimulating and informative they are largely done by teachers and contain little of the pupils' work.
- 3.28 Work is regularly marked, but some comments are rather general and not always specific enough to indicate where and how pupils can improve. However, some very good practice was seen, for example in English, where marking provides encouraging and helpful comments. A section in each pupil's diary contains useful English, mathematics and general targets.
- 3.29 Data from standardised and other testing are used effectively to track pupils' progress and inform planning and future learning. Tracking and assessment systems have been updated in response to a recommendation of the previous inspection report in 2010. Assessment information is now readily accessible in electronic form for teachers. As recommended in 2010, identifying and promoting practice in teaching has been an area of much recent focus, with the sharing of good practice. Work is still in hand; it is the intention that the school marking policy will be strengthened through further monitoring as the roles of the subject co-ordinators and section leaders are developed.

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 pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 In line with its aims, the school is successful in actively promoting fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils have a respect for others, particularly those from different faiths. Monitoring of the provision across the school is excellent, with very effective recording of opportunities for developing this aspect of school life. When pupils leave the school they are extremely well-rounded individuals with a very strong understanding of their responsibilities to others and the impact of their actions. Pupils are emotionally mature for their age, including those with special needs. They speak with self-confidence, assurance and a strong awareness of their own needs and those of others.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, the youngest children upwards co-operate and share with each other; their behaviour is exemplary. They are very happy at school and display high levels of independence. Relationships are excellent at all levels, resulting in an inclusive and tolerant community. Children are extremely happy at school, with all respecting each other's differences and similarities. For children in Reception, attending assemblies provides an opportunity for them to reflect on the needs of others and celebrate their own achievements, as well as those of older pupils. The children are encouraged to recognise the needs of others in the world who are less fortunate by raising money for charity. Different cultural festivals are enthusiastically celebrated.
- 4.4 In the main school, all pupils demonstrate excellent spiritual awareness and, whilst there is a focus upon the Catholic faith and Christian teachings, children of different faiths view these as common values relevant to all members of the school society. They develop a strong awareness of a multi-cultural society by participating not only in assemblies celebrating festivals in the Catholic calendar, such as the Ash Wednesday liturgy, but also in assemblies for key festivals of other religious faiths. For example, Year 1 held a Diwali day and a parent assisted children in leading a Ramadan assembly. Pupils develop an empathy for those who are in need, or are less fortunate than themselves, by leading prayers. They spoke proudly about their charity fundraising activities, for example to support a school in Nepal. They learn to serve the community by being involved in events such as carol singing at several venues, collecting food for charity as part of harvest celebrations and participating in local poetry recitations.
- 4.5 Extremely positive relationships exist between pupils and they are very aware of the need to be kind and considerate towards others. British values of tolerance and understanding are central to the school's ethos and pupils from different religious backgrounds clearly respect the beliefs and values of others. There is excellent interaction between groups within classes and also between children of different ages. Pupils have a very strong sense of what is right and wrong and this is clearly demonstrated by their general conduct, which is excellent. There is an understanding of the concept of personal responsibility, and pupils demonstrate a growing knowledge of how the law of England operates. Pupils are extremely polite and courteous, in line with one of the school's aims.
- 4.6 Teachers actively promote British values in their lessons and there are a number of displays around the school promoting this aspect of school life. Pupils learn about the public institutions and services of England in their lessons. Pupils in Year 5 and

6 saw democracy in action when they made a recent trip to the Houses of Parliament and questioned their local MP. Their experiences are recorded in a most informative display. Pupils speak positively about the school council, demonstrating a clear understanding of the democratic nature of elections and the need for all to have a voice. They understand the need for rules and laws, and were involved in devising the six classroom rules which underpin the system for sanctions and rewards. The school celebrates good behaviour at special assemblies and pupils enthusiasm to gain a certificate indicates how aware they are of the need adhere to the school's rules. Other displays in classrooms show that pupils have considered the link with national civil and criminal laws.

- 4.7 Pupils acquire a strong appreciation and respect for their culture and that of others through the many multi-cultural events in the school.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 In the EYFS, staff are committed to providing an extremely happy, caring and purposeful environment, built on mutual trust and respect. Key people form strong bonds with children and all adults work together to promote high standards of behaviour and courtesy. Children learn about healthy eating and enjoy nutritious lunches and healthy snacks. Regular exercise is taken in play sessions, in physical education, and music and movement lessons.
- 4.10 Pupils in the main school are happy and well integrated into the life of the school. They genuinely respect their teachers and are appreciative of everything that is done for them. Mutual respect clearly exists between the children who are tolerant of others from different backgrounds, cultures or faiths.
- 4.11 Pupils are encouraged to lead healthy lives through displays about healthy eating and good lunchtime menus. They participate in two hours of sport or PE per week and have access to a wide range of extra-curricular sports clubs.
- 4.12 Procedures to prevent bullying are very strong. Pupils know what action to take if they experience anything inappropriate online. This issue is actively promoted by the school, for example through holding an anti-bullying day. Pupils are genuinely concerned about the welfare and happiness of their peers and are very clear about their responsibilities if they witness any bullying. In discussions and in their questionnaire responses, pupils said that bullying was rare and was well-handled by the school.
- 4.13 The school has excellent systems in place to promote good behaviour and to address poor conduct. Each half of term an assembly is organised where good behaviour, effort and academic achievement are recognised and celebrated. Pastoral screening has been introduced for all children where results are monitored and pupils with lower scores put into nurture groups where their wellbeing is closely supervised. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, were unhappy with the system of rewards and sanctions. Inspectors do not agree with this view, finding that a new sanctions and rewards system has been introduced to ensure greater consistency. Records show that rewards and sanctions are being awarded as intended. Pupils were fully involved in this and in discussions, felt that their views were valued. The six classroom rules, devised by the pupils, set out expectations of behaviour and are modified for younger pupils and those with particular needs.

- 4.14 The school has suitable arrangements to gather the opinions of the pupils. Questionnaire results showed that a minority of pupils felt that the school did not ask for their views, but inspectors judge that this is not the case. Those spoken to were content that they had ways of making their views known. The school council provides a forum for this. For example, when discussing the system for rewards and punishment, the council suggested whole-school treats.
- 4.15 There is a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs. Despite the restrictions within the Victorian building, the school recognises the need to make every effort to do so.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.17 In the EYFS the provision for children's well-being is excellent. Supported by well-trained staff in a friendly, stimulating environment each child's welfare is strongly promoted.
- 4.18 The school places high priority on the safeguarding of pupils and in ensuring their health and safety. Matters of health and safety are managed by an appropriate committee which reports to the governors. Prior to the inspection, the safeguarding policy did not meet the most recent requirements. In addition, not all staff had read all the latest official guidance as required, but by the end of the inspection this had been rectified and the policy amended so that it now meets requirements. In spite of these shortcomings, the day-to-day implementation of safeguarding is secure and reflects requirements. Staff receive suitable training in child-protection at the appropriate level. Induction programmes for new staff ensure that up-to-date information about procedures is carefully disseminated; as a result, staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare health and safety. If necessary, the school liaises with local agencies as is required. The safer recruitment policy and procedures are thoroughly implemented and the required checks on staff are completed and recorded.
- 4.19 Appropriate measures are in place to reduce the risk from hazards including fire. A comprehensive policy and fire risk assessments are in place, and regular checks, reviews and servicing are undertaken by an external agency, and fully recorded. Fire drills take place at regular intervals and are well minuted, showing successful evacuation of the premises. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for areas of the school and off-site activities. Any concerns are dealt with swiftly.
- 4.20 Procedures for caring for pupils who are sick or injured are very good, but the accommodation used while they wait for parents gives little privacy. Medicines are securely stored, and comprehensive medical information is kept confidentially. Many staff have first-aid training and some at the higher paediatric level, particularly in the EYFS. Excellent provision is made for pupils requiring support for specific disabilities.
- 4.21 The admission and attendance registers are accurately completed and stored appropriately for at least three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 There is a good structure for effective governance. The main governing body is supported in its work by four committees which meet regularly. They cover appropriate areas of school life, such as finance, education, staffing and accommodation and this ensures that governors identify and fulfil their responsibilities in these areas. Consequently, the school has good levels of accommodation and resources. Governors have a sufficient range of expertise but have not had extensive training, nor has there been much recruitment to the body in recent times.
- 5.3 Arrangements for child protection, health and safety are secure. Governors receive regular reports on health and safety, on safeguarding, and ensure that an annual review of policy and procedures is undertaken. This is not wholly effective as some aspects of the safeguarding arrangements did not initially meet the latest requirements. Nevertheless, measures to support child protection at the day-to-day level are effective and meet requirements.
- 5.4 Contact between governors and the school is good, enabling them to form an independent view of its work. There are link governors for the EYFS and for special educational needs who visit the school and provide valuable support. The governing body is therefore well informed about the EYFS and the board strongly supports the school's vision for the continuing development of the setting. In addition, the governors have been involved in producing a whole-school improvement plan and many governors are regular visitors for social and other events. Governors have been kept informed about school life by regular reports from the head and presentations on various aspects of the school, such as PSHEE.

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

- 5.5 The management and leadership of the school are good.
- 5.6 In the EYFS, leadership and management provide clear and ambitious educational direction, as reflected in the excellent quality of the children's education and personal development. The regular monitoring of the educational programmes is effective and ensures that planning and assessment across the setting enable all children to achieve well, in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. All staff aspire to improve and their training needs are identified and, where possible, implemented. The systems for self-evaluation include all members of the cohesive team, and are continual. Staff in the EYFS are well-qualified and knowledgeable. Excellent systems for appraisal and supervision of staff operate successfully and staff are aware of their current targets. The designated leads for safeguarding in the EYFS have a clear understanding of the role and all staff are well versed in what to look for and do should they have any concerns. All staff actively promote equality, diversity and British values to create a positive and inclusive setting, and understand the need to guard against the risk of the radicalisation of pupils.

- 5.7 The school is particularly successful in meeting its aims in encouraging pupils to be caring, courteous and disciplined and that they become aware of their Christian responsibilities to society. This is because of strong senior leadership which places an emphasis on pupils' personal development in all that it does. Effective leadership ensures that pupils show respect for others and understand democratic processes.
- 5.8 The senior leadership team has recently been expanded and includes representatives from the EYFS, Years 1 to 2, and Years 3 to 6. They discharge their responsibilities for the health and safety of pupils and for child protection very well. Some matters of safeguarding had to be brought up-to-date during the inspection, but pupils were not at risk; day to day safeguarding is handled well.
- 5.9 Planning for development is generally good. The whole school improvement plan is comprehensive in scope, covering all the pertinent areas, and is supported by development plans in subject areas. The best subject plans are very good, being sharp and detailed but, overall, these plans vary in quality. Not all are up-to-date. Both the whole school plan and some subject plans lack detail and ambition.
- 5.10 The monitoring of the school's work is good. A system of performance management is in place which engages teachers in self-review, sets targets for improvement, and allows them to see others teach. This is an efficient system although in some cases the outcomes lack sharpness about how improvement is to be achieved. There has been a recent initiative to improve the management of subject areas, all of which now have a subject co-ordinator. They generally manage well and with a good degree of enthusiasm, but do not have job descriptions by which their performance can be measured. A member of the senior management team has recently taken the role of monitoring this area but does not have this as part of her job description.
- 5.11 The school is successful in recruiting and retaining staff of good quality. All safer recruitment checks have been carried out and recorded correctly. They have a good induction programme and all staff are encouraged to further their professional development. Training for safeguarding, health and safety has led to good procedures and practice.
- 5.12 The school has made good progress on the recommendations from the previous inspection, although in some cases, work is still in progress.
- 5.13 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The school fosters highly constructive relationships with parents through its effective communication systems, and the varied opportunities parents have to be involved in school life. The strong partnership that is developed with the parents of the youngest children is maintained as they progress through the school. In the EYFS daily contact and effective liaison books ensure that communication between home and school helps the learning and development of the children.
- 5.14 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire parents were supportive of the school, almost all of those responding appreciating the quality of the school's pastoral care, the extra-curricular activities offered, the school's responses to their questions and their ability to become involved in the school's work and life. They also felt their child was happy and safe in the school. Staff are readily available to parents at the beginning and end of the day, and they can be contacted through the school office. The head is regularly available before school and parents are familiar with the arrangements; this allows the vast majority of queries or concerns to be dealt with swiftly and informally. Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. School diaries and planners and other

means of contact ensure beneficial communication between home and school. Parents are invited to information evenings on the curriculum to gain greater insight into teaching and learning. They are encouraged to support a variety of activities, including assemblies, the celebration of Mass, or sporting fixtures. Some listen to pupils reading and assist on outings. When appropriate, the particular expertise of parents is used to enhance the curriculum.

- 5.15 The school prospectus, parents' handbooks, along with weekly newsletters, provide all current and prospective parents with detailed and relevant information. It is not easy to access pertinent information on the school's current website at present, but steps are being taken to improve it.
- 5.16 The thriving parents' society organises regular social and fundraising events, the proceeds of which benefit the whole school, such as paying for theatre companies to come into school and contributions to football tours.
- 5.17 A very small proportion of parents were not happy with the way the school handles concerns, pupils' behaviour, or the information they are given about their child's progress. Examination of the complaints file shows that there are very few complaints from parents and those received are handled promptly and thoroughly. The school's policy for handling complaints is available to parents and the stated procedures are adhered to. As indicated throughout this report inspectors judge that pupils are very well behaved. Inspectors judged that the end of year report, received by parents, to be full and very informative on the progress made by their children, and it includes helpful performance data. Further interim reports and regular parents' meetings help to keep parents informed of progress, but targets for further improvement are not consistently set.

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