



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CARLETON HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Carleton House Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Carleton House Preparatory School
DfE Number	341/6004
Registered Charity Number	505310
Address	Carleton House Preparatory School 145 Menlove Avenue Liverpool Merseyside L18 3EE
Telephone Number	0151 7220756
Email Address	info@carletonhouse.co.uk
Head	Mrs Anne Daniels
Chair of Governors	Mr Matt Amiry
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	177
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (82 boys; 95 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 53 5-11: 124
Joint Heads of EYFS Setting	Mrs Danielle Griffies and Ms Kate Hickey
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	1st to 4th October 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2010.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Christopher Sanderson

Mrs Kathleen Hayes

Mrs Susan Webb

Mrs Kirsten Jackson

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	8
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
(a) The quality of governance	11
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	11

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Carleton House School is a Roman Catholic co-educational day school. It was founded in 1975 by a group of parents to replace a preparatory school which had closed, in order to preserve the traditions of a Catholic education. It moved to its current location in the Calderstones area of Liverpool in 2009. The school is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is administered by a board of governors, who are both directors of the company and trustees of the charity. The school is housed in a former residential building, set in its own grounds.
- 1.2 The school accepts pupils between the ages of three and eleven. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is an integral part of the school. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher and deputy head, and has carried out work to improve both indoor and outdoor facilities in the EYFS.
- 1.3 The school aims to inspire a love of learning, to foster intellectual curiosity and expand cultural horizons, recognising the unique value of all its pupils and focusing on helping them to achieve their full potential, intellectually, morally, spiritually, emotionally and physically. It seeks to be a place of growth, discovery and celebration and, in keeping with its mission statement, 'We love, live and learn with Jesus', aims to be an inclusive and welcoming family community, rooted in its core faith values.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection there were 177 pupils on roll, 95 of whom are girls and 82 boys. This includes 53 pupils in the EYFS; in the Nursery 25 attend part-time and five full-time. In Reception 23 pupils attend full-time. There are 124 pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- 1.5 The school does not select pupils on the grounds of ability. Almost all pupils live locally. Pupils come mostly from families with business or professional backgrounds and about half are from Roman Catholic families. Pupils come from a wide range of cultural heritages. The school has identified 11 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), two of whom receive extra support for the language, and 12 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 As a result of good, well-focused teaching and excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision, pupils' academic and other achievements are excellent throughout the school. They score highly in national tests, and a high proportion gains entry to selective senior schools. Pupils enjoy success in a wide range of team and individual sports and in choral and drama events. Information which tracks pupils' progress is not consistently used in teaching, particularly in the planning of work for the most able. The EYFS is excellent in meeting the children's needs but does not yet engage with other settings to share practice and moderate children's profile results. Following recommendations at the previous inspection, the school library provision has been extended and pupils of all ages, including in the EYFS benefit from extensively refurbished outdoor areas. Children in the EYFS enjoy accommodation, which has been extended significantly, following a recommendation at the previous inspection and their learning and development benefits from improved access to staff training and clear systems for monitoring and assessment. Pupils co-operate well in their work and play, develop well-tuned skills for learning and have very positive attitudes, both in and out of the classroom.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent, strongly underpinned by the school's Roman Catholic ethos and Christian values. Excellent pastoral care has a firm foundation in the strong relationships between staff and pupils, whose behaviour is outstanding. The school has successfully addressed all the required actions and recommended actions identified at the previous inspection and the quality of welfare, health and safety is now good.
- 2.3 Good governance, leadership and management have successfully developed and executed a systematic approach to addressing the requirements and recommendations of the previous inspection, ensuring that progress has been strong and providing a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can succeed, both in and out of the classroom. Governors' understanding now benefits from a training programme and school development is guided by a structured plan. Links with parents are excellent and parents are extremely positive about the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Improve the use of tracking information to raise still further the standard of teaching and learning, particularly for the most able pupils.
2. Develop a more thorough approach to the governors' annual review of safeguarding
3. Ensure that outside agencies or other settings play a part in moderating the children's profile scores at the end of Early Years.

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 Throughout the school, including the EYFS, they are very well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Good teaching, in combination with excellent pastoral support and encouragement, and high expectations of the pupils' conduct and commitment, ensures high levels of achievement through the recognition of individual abilities and the nurturing of potential. Other important contributory factors are the broad curriculum and the pupils' outstanding attitudes towards their learning. Most pupils gain entry to local selective secondary schools of their choice.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, children make good progress in their learning; some make excellent progress, especially in writing. They learn sounds well and can use cues to communicate new words. They count confidently to at least 20, including in Nursery, and many understand what 'one more than' is. By the end of Reception some children confidently use subtraction for numbers up to 20. They use different materials for measuring and can compare lengths. They conduct scientific experiments into floating and sinking and into friction on a slope and its effect on the speed of a vehicle and the distance it will travel before stopping. Children in the EYFS work independently, particularly outdoors, and are enthusiastic about the challenges they are given. They put forward ideas and theories, with supporting reasons. Excellent planning of exciting themes, such as pirates and superheroes, stimulate the children's imaginations and encourage them to solve puzzles in literacy and science.
- 3.4 Older pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills throughout the curriculum, as well as in extra-curricular activities. They are highly articulate, read confidently and reason logically. They have an extremely wide range of knowledge in relation to their age. Their numeracy skills are very strong, especially in the higher years, and many expressed a strong love of mathematics; they work well both independently and collaboratively and think critically. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) competently across a range of subjects for research or to present their work. On leaving the school, a substantial majority of pupils enter secondary schools of their choice.
- 3.5 Outside the classroom, pupils' achievements in both group and individual activities are significant. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to extend their interests and compete successfully. Sports teams achieve high levels of success locally in a wide range of sports, including swimming, cross country, short tennis and athletics. The choir sings with excellent tone and diction, and performs regularly outside school. It has been invited many times to sing at the Metropolitan Cathedral.
- 3.6 The achievement of pupils with SEND is particularly good. The high quality of support they receive, together with the very well-structured programme of work to support their learning, enables them to achieve very high standards in relation to their capabilities. The support provided for pupils with EAL enables them to access the curriculum fully and achieve very well. In subjects and year groups where academic challenge for the most able is well planned and of high quality, these pupils extend their skills and knowledge well. In a few cases, the achievement of the

most able was limited by inconsistencies in identifying them and the degree of challenge provided.

- 3.7 The following analysis uses the national data for 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Attainment is excellent. Results in national tests at the age of 7 are well above the national average for maintained primary schools and are exceptional in reading. Results at age of 11 are also well above the national average for maintained primary schools and are exceptional in mathematics. The school's results for 2013 indicate that this level of attainment has been maintained. Such standards, together with the nationally standardised progress data available, demonstrate a high rate of progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. Inspection evidence, as seen in lesson observations, written work and interviews with pupils, confirms this judgement.
- 3.8 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Their exemplary behaviour in the classroom strongly supports their overall achievement. They have a marked enthusiasm to learn and approach their studies with confidence. They organise their work efficiently and are assiduous, skilled learners, particularly keen to support one another's learning, working with strong focus both independently and co-operatively.

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

- 3.9 The quality of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The well-planned curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities. It is highly successful in meeting the school's aims of inspiring a love of learning, to foster intellectual curiosity and expand cultural horizons, while maintaining a tradition of academic excellence.
- 3.11 Provision in the EYFS is excellent in meeting the needs of all children, enabling them all to make at least good progress. This is the result of excellent planning based on a thorough knowledge of the abilities and interests of each child, gained through observation and the establishment of planned learning opportunities. An excellent induction programme helps children settle. The setting seeks to challenge the children in every aspect of the curriculum, encouraging them to form hypotheses and give reasons when trying to solve problems, as, for instance, when working out how many gold coins will sink a ship.
- 3.12 Educational programmes in Years 1 to 6 broadly follow the National Curriculum, with greater emphasis in the final years on preparation for entrance examinations to senior schools. The bi-annual topic weeks provide a cross-curricular approach, which enables the pupils to study a topic in more depth. 'Liverpool, our city', for example, provided the pupils with a greater understanding of the culture and history of their local community.
- 3.13 The breadth of the curriculum throughout the school strongly supports the pupils' excellent achievements, facilitating the development of their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils learn Spanish from EYFS, whilst ICT, taught as a separate subject from Year 1, provides them with the necessary skills to support their cross-curricular work. A comprehensive personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) and a wide-ranging religious education curriculum enable pupils to gain an understanding of themselves, other people and the wider world.

- 3.14 Well-focused individual support for pupils with SEND, provided both in and out of the classroom, ensures that they make good progress. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution through their purposeful work with individuals, groups and the whole class to provide excellent support for learning in the classroom. They work with individuals identified as needing a boost to their performance. The organisation of pupils into ability groups enables work to be planned appropriately for a range of abilities. A gradual increase in teaching by subject specialists as pupils move through the school enables them to achieve high standards. The school identifies carefully those pupils with EAL and provides well-considered extra support to those who need it.
- 3.15 In response to a recommendation at the previous inspection, the school has enhanced its library provision, installing libraries in the classrooms and corridors. Pupils now have greater access to a wider range of books.
- 3.16 The very good extra-curricular programme strongly promotes the school's aim to help pupils meet their full potential. A varied and extensive programme of activities includes Spanish, fencing, choir, football and an eco/gardening club, which provides fruit and vegetables for the school kitchen. Provision for sport is similarly extensive, including swimming, athletics, and cross-country. Pupils have only limited access to individual instrumental music tuition and ensemble playing. From Year 4 onwards, annual residential trips challenge pupils and provide them with additional experiences. Residential visits contribute to the geography curriculum and, in their final year, pupils take part in a cultural residential trip abroad.
- 3.17 After school care provision is outstanding; staff provide a wide and varied range of well-organised activities, appropriate for all ages and abilities. The staff at all levels, including the EYFS, work together closely to contribute observations for the pupils' profiles. A wide range of visitors to the school and visits to places of interest for each year group, including museums, theatres and a zoo, enrich the curriculum and the pupils' cultural education. Recent visitors have led theatre and ballet workshops. Pupils benefit from effective links with the local community, such as their musical presentations in a local care home and support for a range of charities, including a local food bank, a cancer charity and a children's charity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.19 Teaching successfully promotes the school's aim to enable pupils to reach their full potential. All pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school helps them to learn. In the EYFS, teaching is enthusiastic, welcoming and supports children of all abilities to succeed and develop their skills. The challenge and amount of support provided are well matched to needs, enabling each child to work at a high level in relation to his or her capability. Staff listen carefully to, and support, those who have SEND. The setting has an effective tracking system, which enables it to be aware of any differences in development between groups of children.
- 3.20 Across the school, almost all teaching takes proper account of the range of needs of the pupils. Planning is good overall, identifying learning objectives and providing an appropriate range of tasks and suitable levels of support. The good balance between individual, group and class work enables pupils to take responsibility for their learning. At its best, teaching fires and inspires the pupils to want to learn. In

the small number of lessons where teaching was less successful, planning did not take full account of the range of pupils' needs or showed an unrealistic expectation of capability. In the majority of lessons, teaching makes effective use of available resources and a good pace maintains the pupils' interest. Skilful questioning to challenge pupils' thinking leads to their deeper understanding. For example, teaching in an upper school English lesson prompted pupils to draw on their high level skill in character analysis in response to in-depth discussion. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive throughout the school. A high level of mutual respect empowers pupils to be more confident in expressing their views and answering questions. Teaching draws strongly on praise and encouragement to excellent effect, adding to the pupils' progress and development.

- 3.21 Since the previous inspection, improved support ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND and EAL are met well, enabling them to make good progress. A small minority of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire were concerned that the school did not meet the needs of the most able pupils. The school has developed its work for these pupils and the inspection identified some good practice. However, inspectors judged that teaching does not always provide sufficient challenge to extend fully the most academically able. The most successful lessons include carefully prepared extension materials, which motivate pupils to produce work of a very high standard. Grouping pupils by ability within some areas of the upper school enables teaching to extend the most able and promotes high standards.
- 3.22 Marking is good, providing pupils with constructive comments, celebrating their strengths and giving guidance on specific areas in need of improvement. Teaching also provides pupils with helpful oral feedback which, alongside assessment, gives the pupils an understanding of their progress. The recently introduced assessment, recording and tracking of pupil progress has yet to be fully implemented in order to ensure that accurate assessment information guides planning, particularly for the most able pupils. Throughout the school, information from observation and assessment is very well used to monitor progress and plan for pupils with SEND and those who are not making expected progress. Within the EYFS, practice does not involve other settings or agencies in moderating assessed performance of children at the end of the setting.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 In ensuring the pupils' excellent personal development, the school meets its aim to provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment where all pupils, irrespective of race, gender, creed and disability, may flourish. Pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school. They demonstrate high emotional maturity, especially when helping younger pupils in the dining room, playground and in activities. They serve the community well as head boy and girl, prefects, monitors and, from Year 3, as school council representatives. Pupils value an even-handed approach to delegating roles. They are self-assured, confident and have high self-esteem, based on a good insight into their own skills and talents, developed through participation in sport, drama and music and PSHE lessons.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children develop self-confidence and independence and show a genuine concern for one another. They are aware of the need to help each other, for example, when trying to balance along a line of bricks. Children in Nursery share an outdoor space with Reception and thus come to know their future teachers. Children in Reception play with older children in the playground and at lunch. This interaction supports a well-planned transition programme to Year 1. The setting also provides a good induction scheme for those joining Nursery.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate excellent spiritual awareness and understanding of a Christian life, and show understanding of putting faith into practice. They discussed in an RE lesson, for example, how the story of the prodigal son could be lived in the playground today. They are aware of the non-material aspects of life, as seen in discussions in Year 3 about bereavement and loss. The pupils raise money for a wide range of local and national charities. They appreciate their own good fortune, bringing in food for those who are less fortunate. Pupils demonstrated a sense of reverence in an assembly when suggesting contents for a magic box to change the world.
- 4.5 Pupils have an excellent moral understanding, demonstrating a clear sense of right and wrong, and knowing why rules are necessary. In their conduct, their genuine concern for one another and their keenness to help those less fortunate than themselves they demonstrate the moral and ethical values promoted by the school's Christian family ethos. They explore moral issues such as "Is it better not to be a witness?" They appreciate the value of apologising and try to resolve issues themselves.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is excellent. They are enthusiastic, courteous, well-behaved and keen to co-operate. They are very polite to one another and work together well in lessons, extra-curricular activities and in teams. They are tolerant of one another and of differing opinions. Pupils experience a good balance of views in topics about which there is a range of political opinions. They are supportive of one another's learning and look out for one another. When the school purchased a defibrillator, pupils raised enough funds to buy one to donate to an inner-city Liverpool school.
- 4.7 The cultural awareness of the pupils is excellent and their involvement in music, art and drama enriches their experience, as seen, for instance, in the Year 5

watercolours of parts of flowers. Pupils enjoy harmonious relations with those from backgrounds different from their own. They gain a clear understanding of other faiths and cultures, valuing their achievements as well as those of the Western cultural tradition. Their understanding of their own culture develops through the choir's regular participation in concerts at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and visiting theatre and ballet groups in school. They developed a strong sense of civic pride when taking part in a topic week on 'Liverpool, our City'. A wide variety of interesting and challenging trips, both in the UK and abroad, enhance the pupils' cultural understanding. The school's recent regaining of an international school award enables the pupils to gain an insight into the lives of pupils in other countries, whilst teaching and visitors allow them to gain an understanding of other faiths and cultures, and their festivals.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim to foster an inclusive community to which all pupils, parents and staff feel they belong. Throughout the school, staff provide outstanding care, support and guidance. Teachers are conscientious in fulfilling their pastoral responsibilities and are supported well through frequent staff meetings and assemblies. Staff know the pupils very well and treat them as individuals. Excellent relationships, both amongst the pupils themselves and with staff, promote high and positive expectations, which pupils meet successfully.
- 4.10 The EYFS makes an excellent contribution to the well-being of the children. Each child has a supportive relationship with a key person and all staff make the children feel welcomed and valued. Staff are keen for children to participate fully and to enjoy school. Even the youngest children play co-operatively. They learn about the effect of their behaviour on others.
- 4.11 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and enjoy a well-balanced menu. Well-planned activities in the EYFS, such as making healthy fruit kebabs, help children understand the need for a healthy diet. The importance of regular exercise is strongly promoted, particularly in the use of the recently improved school grounds. 'Wake up and shake' exercises, for those who arrive before the start of the school day, results in the pupils being calm and ready to learn. Staff in the EYFS encourage the children to become increasingly independent in visiting the toilet and washing their hands.
- 4.12 Excellent behaviour is strongly promoted; stars and merits are awarded for good or helpful behaviour. The school deals constructively with any unacceptable behaviour, taking good account of any related difficulty or disability. Pupils commented that they feel very safe and would happily approach a member of staff if they felt concerned. They confidently stated that bullying was not a problem in the school. Inspectors judged that the school has good procedures to deal with such incidents, should they occur. A satisfactory plan to improve accessibility for pupils with SEND forms the foundation for suitable provision and covers the requisite areas.
- 4.13 The school employs effective methods to seek the views of pupils, for example through the school council and a suggestion box. In council meetings, they can voice opinions and influence decisions.

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

- 4.14 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.15 Throughout the school, significant improvements have been made to procedures and facilities to ensure that all the areas for attention, identified at the previous inspection, have been addressed successfully. A warm and nurturing environment in the EYFS ensures that all children feel valued and are secure and happy. Children are confident in all areas of the setting and in the safety and care that the staff provide for them.
- 4.16 Safeguarding arrangements throughout the school now meet requirements. All the necessary checks on appointment are undertaken for governors, staff and volunteers. These are appropriately recorded in accordance with the principles of safer recruitment. Thorough child protection procedures enable staff to provide well for the pupils and deal successfully with any matters which may arise.
- 4.17 The school has effective measures to guard against fire and other hazards. Fire safety equipment is tested regularly and matters arising are recorded carefully and remedied promptly. Emergency evacuations are rehearsed regularly at varying times of day. Following a requirement noted at the previous inspection, extensive training has been undertaken in fire safety and the majority of staff are now qualified as fire wardens. The school has a thorough approach to assessing risk, testing electrical equipment and the storage of chemicals, ensuring good management of potential hazards. Regular risk assessments in the EYFS ensure safety and provide a secure environment for stimulating and adventurous play. Good systems ensure the safe handing over of children to parents.
- 4.18 The leadership and staff have a good understanding of health and safety matters and work hard to ensure a safe and secure environment for the pupils. This includes the recent refurbishment of the outdoor space and the provision of all-weather surfaces. There are now sufficient washroom facilities and a washbasin in the medical room, addressing requirements identified at the previous inspection. The school makes good provision for those who are ill or injured and for those with SEND. It has clear policies for the storage and administration of medication and most staff hold a qualification in first aid. Staff are also trained in the use of a defibrillator. The school keeps a log of incidents requiring first aid, although the information is not being reviewed sufficiently often. Following a further requirement at the previous inspection, the school has introduced and maintains an admission register in accordance with requirements. Attendance registers are completed and stored with due care and attention.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The quality of governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The governors are effective in discharging their statutory responsibilities. They strongly support the Catholic ethos of the school, and have worked well with the leadership to enable the school to deal with matters arising at the previous inspection. The governing body now has a range of strategies to gain a good oversight of the school and its work. These include visits to the school, attendance at events, a developing reporting framework, regular meetings with the head and a monthly surgery for parents. The governors' astute financial planning and investment have ensured the continuing development of premises and resources, notably extensively refurbished outdoor areas and generous, extended accommodation for the EYFS.
- 5.3 In response to a recommendation at the previous inspection, governors have developed an increasing commitment to training, including regular 'away days' for the whole governing body, providing them with a growing understanding of their role. Together with the wide range of experience governors bring to the school, this enables them to have a good insight into its work and to provide its leadership with strong support and challenge. Governors' committees and individual governors, including one who takes a special interest in the EYFS, report to the full board on specific areas of school life. However, the governors' role in monitoring the work of the school is not yet fully developed. Their annual review of safeguarding arrangements, for example, meets minimum requirements but lacks detail.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.5 Good progress has been achieved in tackling matters raised at the previous inspection. Leadership and management are effective at all levels, and pay particular attention to matters of safeguarding. The leadership team, all new in post since the previous inspection, is highly successful in driving the school forward, providing clear educational direction. The school's outcomes in the academic and personal development of the pupils demonstrate this. Leadership and management of the EYFS is good; staff put a very high priority on the children's welfare. In response to recommendations specific to the EYFS at the previous inspection, its premises have doubled in size, a new well-equipped, accessible outdoor area has been added, monitoring systems and a focus on staff training have been introduced, and assessment now includes identifying the next steps for each child.
- 5.6 The school is successful in its self-evaluation. Leadership and management in the EYFS ensure the quality of children's care and education in a continually improving environment which seeks to maintain the highest standards. Throughout the school,

- the leadership strives relentlessly to make improvements which will benefit the whole community.
- 5.7 Progress since the previous inspection is seen in the clearer identification of areas for improvement in the school development plan. The plan identifies well-defined objectives and targets based upon self-evaluation findings, but lacks success criteria, procedures for monitoring its implementation, and for evaluating outcomes rigorously.
- 5.8 The school is successful in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff and all required checks are undertaken. The safeguarding of pupils throughout the school is ensured through appropriate training in child protection, safer recruitment, welfare, health and safety and risk management. In response to the previous inspection report, the school has planned for and implemented an effective appraisal system throughout the school for all staff, including teaching assistants and staff in administration. Appraisal includes lesson observation, although the conclusions from this are still being implemented to improve the quality of teaching to that of the best. Staff training needs are identified through the appraisal process
- 5.9 Links with parents are excellent. The parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school and its leadership and concurred with inspectors' findings that it fulfils its aim of ensuring that pupils are happy, secure and confident. The effective and close relationship with parents, as noted in the previous inspection, has been maintained. The school conducted its own parental satisfaction survey in 2012 and responded accordingly.
- 5.10 Communication with parents includes mail, email and texting. A new website provides social networking feeds and website newsletters, a downloadable school calendar and a news digest feed. The school is seeking to develop further its links with parents through regular improvements to the quality of the newsletter, and developing the website further as a source of information for the whole school community. The school prospectus and website provide useful information, including contact details for the chair of governors and a list of policies available to parents and prospective parents.
- 5.11 Parents are involved in the life and work of the school, being welcome at school mass and class assemblies and being invited to stay for refreshments and informal contact with staff. The school has a highly effective parent/teachers association offering a wide range of social events and providing additional learning resources. Parents, including those of pupils in EYFS, are also able to take part in whole-school events, engaging, for example, in the life of the school through helping with trips, hearing children read and sharing skills and knowledge. They take responsibility for some activities, such as the eco/gardening club.
- 5.12 The school has an effective and appropriate procedure to deal with complaints; parents with a concern may contact the school at any time. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire Parents indicated satisfaction with the manner and effectiveness with which concerns are handled, with due care and consideration and in line with the published procedure.
- 5.13 Parents receive good information about their child's progress. They value the two parents' evenings and half yearly reports. Improvements since the previous inspection include the introduction of interim half term reports for Reception and Year 1, a Nursery night for new parents, the school magazine, invitations to

assemblies, grandparents' day, stay and play days for EYFS parents and information available to parents through EYFS notice boards.

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