



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

THE GOWER SCHOOL

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The Gower School

Full Name of School	The Gower School
DfE Number	206/6381
EYFS Number	131690
Address	The Gower School 10 Cynthia Street Barnsbury London N1 9JF
Telephone Number	020 7700 2445 (Nursery); 0207 7278 2020 (Primary)
Fax Number	020 7609 1119
Email Address	info@thegowerschool.co.uk
Principal	Miss Emma Gowers
Proprietor	Miss Emma Gowers
Age Range	0 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	228
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (109 boys; 119 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 58 5-11: 90 3-5 (EYFS): 80
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 228
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Kelly Shawyer
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	10 Jun 2014 to 13 Jun 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous Ofsted inspection was in March 2009 and the Early Years Foundation Stage was inspected by ISI in November 2013.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Sue Bennett

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Annabelle Hancock

Assistant Reporting Inspector

Mr Paul Barlow

Team Inspector (Head of Department, IAPS school)

Mrs Claire Osborn

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CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	3
(a) Main findings	3
(b) Action points	4
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	4
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	4
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	5
(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	9
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
6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	14
(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	14
(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being	14
(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision	15
(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision	16

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Gower Primary and Nursery School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged from three months to eleven years old. The school operates on two sites about one and a half miles apart in the London Borough of Islington. The Nursery, for children up to four years old, opened in 2000 on the North Road site. The primary site opened in 2007 on Cynthia Street to accommodate Reception and Years 1 to 6. The school has the Montessori Schools Association (MEAB) accreditation. The school is a private limited company, run by a sole proprietor who takes responsible for the financial and administrative operations. There is no governing body. The proprietor is also the school principal and takes responsibility for all educational aspects of the school.
- 1.2 The school aims for all children to be happy, confident learners, who achieve their potential. Since the previous inspection, significant changes include the establishment of a sports department and a dedicated medical centre, and the extension of the primary site.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were a total of 228 pupils on roll. Of these 138 pupils are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); 30 boys and 38 girls attend on a part-time basis and 34 boys and 36 girls attend full time. There are 90 pupils in Years 1 to 6. The school has identified 20 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 14 have extra support provided for their learning. There are 14 children in the EYFS who have English as an additional language (EAL), all of whom receive extra support. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average and some pupils have well above average ability. The majority of pupils come from business or professional families based locally. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and others are from a broad mix of other nationalities and cultures.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage

School	NC name
Les Nounours	Nursery 3 months – 2 years
Les Petits Lapins	Nursery 14 months – 3 years
Les Petits Poussins	Nursery 16 months – 3 years
Les Petites Souris	Nursery 2.5 – 4 years
Les Papillons	Nursery 3 – 5 years
Les Dauphins	Nursery 3 – 5 years
Les Hiboux	Reception

Primary Department

School	NC name
Les Etoiles de Mer	Years 1 & 2
Les Baleines	Years 1 & 2
Les Aigles Imperiaux	Years 3 & 4
Les Aigles Royaux	Years 3 & 4
Les Rennes	Years 5 & 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent. The school successfully achieves its educational aim and ethos. The rich breadth of curricular and extra-curricular activities enables all pupils to develop excellent knowledge and aptitudes for learning. The pupils' individual needs are particularly well supported and challenged. Resources are plentiful throughout the school, although the location and organisation of the school's well-resourced library does not enable full access by all pupils. Excellent teaching contributes to the pupils' high standards of achievement and progress. Since the previous inspection, revised marking and assessment systems provide pupils with a clear indication on how they can improve their work. The pupils' achievements beyond the classroom include considerable successes in sport, music and national competitions. In the EYFS, the quality of provision is outstanding. Staff know children extremely well. They provide a vibrant learning environment, which motivates children to become independent and investigative learners. Consequently all children make significant progress from their starting points, and are prepared extremely well for future learning.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent, including for those children in the EYFS. The warm, caring community atmosphere that pervades throughout the school, results in pupils developing a strong sense of moral and social responsibility. Their spiritual and cultural awareness is nurtured successfully through activities that enable them to appreciate the non-material aspects of life and become aware of the world. Excellent pastoral care systems ensure that pupils feel safe and extremely well supported. The pupils' behaviour is excellent and incidents of misbehaviour are extremely rare and promptly addressed by the school. Pupils are courteous and considerate towards one another and have mature dispositions. In the EYFS, staff provide outstanding provision for children's well-being. Arrangements for health and safety are excellent. The safeguarding of pupils' welfare is of paramount concern to all staff. Regulatory discrepancies raised at the previous inspection have been suitably addressed and recruitment checks on all new staff are rigorously implemented.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. The sole proprietor has an extremely strong oversight of all aspects of the school's life and a clear vision for future developments. External professional scrutiny exercises strong challenge for the school's leadership, its operational procedures and legal responsibilities. External educational professionals provide further support and advice. Leadership and management is excellent. In the EYFS, outstanding leadership and management evaluate the setting's practice thoroughly and this information informs plans for future development although the views of all staff are not always included in this process. A small minority of parents in pre-inspection questionnaire responses raised concerns about the quality of leadership and management, the school's handling of complaints and timely responses to parents' questions. Inspection evidence does not support these views. The school follows its published procedures thoroughly; an independent panel convenor arbitrates in the event of a complaint. Leadership and management demonstrate a strong commitment towards achieving the best possible standards and outcomes for the pupils, including those children in the EYFS. Links with parents are excellent and most parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and the high levels of care and safety the school provides.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve the organisation of the library so that it is more accessible to all pupils.
 2. In the EYFS, enhance the processes of self-evaluation to involve all staff.

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' learning and achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are very well educated in keeping with the school's aim to enable all pupils to be happy confident learners who achieve their potential. Pupils confidently take responsibility for their learning, in line with the school's educational philosophy.
- 3.3 Pupils are confident and highly articulate. They have a very wide range of vocabulary and general knowledge. For example, pupils understand and use the technical vocabulary of photons to describe how shadows are made. Older pupils show an outstanding application of mathematical skills and competently discuss the difficulties of translating a circle. Pupils read to extremely high standards and write imaginatively and persuasively on a wide range of subjects. They relish opportunities to research topics and show a keen interest in ecology and the living world. The level of support to enhance pupils' skills, including children with additional needs is exemplary. Excellent challenge for more able pupils results in excellent progress and high achievement.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve considerable success in competitive entry to their chosen senior schools, often with scholarships. The individual and group achievements of pupils outside the classroom are strong. The excellent range of opportunities enables pupils to explore new interests and extend their abilities and they participate successfully in national poetry and story-writing competitions. All pupils can play the recorder and most play another musical instrument, some to a high level. They sing very well and oral presentations are of a particularly high standard. They are very proud of their competitive sporting successes.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to the average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This is based on the work seen in lessons, pupils' written work in their books and discussions with pupils. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to those of similar ability. The attainment and progress of pupils with SEND or EAL is particularly strong because of the excellent measure of support they receive, enhanced by the fact that pupils display independence as learners.
- 3.6 The pupils' excellent behaviour strongly supports their overall achievement. Pupils are keen to join in with the many different activities offered and their academic progress is considerable because they respond very well to encouragement to reason, consider options and make informed choices. Pupils listen attentively and display enthusiasm and perseverance, taking great pride in producing work of a high standard. Pupils enjoy their learning. They share their teachers' high expectations and value success whether for themselves or their peers.

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

- 3.7 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The school provides an enriching curriculum in line with its aims to provide an excellent education. The academic curriculum is extremely well balanced and tailored effectively to suit the individual needs of all pupils. For example, individualised activities and support from classroom assistants ensure that pupils of

all abilities have equal access to the curriculum. The recent introduction of specialist teaching for science and physical education (PE) further enhances the curriculum. The overall educational provision is instrumental in enabling the pupils to achieve their excellent levels of attainment.

- 3.9 Curricular support for those requiring additional help is excellent, and the systems for identifying such pupils' needs and supporting their work are highly effective. Form tutors and specialist staff liaise on a regular basis to ensure equality of curriculum access through the use of individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with SEND or EAL. More able and talented pupils are extremely well catered for in teaching, and can be moved up through the year groups to experience a more challenging curriculum.
- 3.10 The curriculum covers the requisite areas of learning, and also includes a very effective personal, social and health programme (PSHE). This is taught as a separate subject each week and provides excellent support for the emotional development of each pupil. A highly stimulating 'work cycle' programme in Years 1 and 2 provides a mix of learning activities and delivers a wealth of opportunities, in line with school's ethos. This is highly effective and paramount in fostering independent learning as pupils choose which activities they wish to participate in. In addition, a modern foreign language is offered from Year 1 and verbal reasoning and philosophy from Year 3. The school uses information and communication technology (ICT) as a valuable tool to support all aspects of the curriculum, as well as teaching it as a discrete subject.
- 3.11 Class teachers develop schemes of work which are regularly reviewed and updated by the senior managers. Cross-curricular work is a strong feature throughout the school. The many bright displays and notices around the school accurately reflect a busy, lively environment. Resources for learning to support the curriculum throughout the school are plentiful and of high quality, although the location and organisation of the school's well-resourced library does not enable full access by all pupils.
- 3.12 The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. A wide variety of clubs is available and these complement lessons effectively by enhancing the pupils' experiences. Before and after-school clubs include yoga and eco-club and there are an exciting range of sporting and musical activities. Workshops and day visits further enrich the curriculum links with the community and provide pupils with an excellent breadth of additional challenge. For example, experiences include an overnight visit by Years 3 and 4 at a national museum and a bushcraft residential visit for Years 5 and 6.
- 3.13 Throughout the school, all pupils participate in a programme of public speaking. Oral presentations in assemblies, public speaking week and poetry week all help foster confidence and articulacy in pupils, which has a significant impact on their overall development.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 The excellent teaching fully supports the school's aims and philosophy and continually provides highly effective opportunities for independent learning. Pupils are helped to make rapid progress by inspiring teaching which demonstrates high

expectations. Relationships between teachers and pupils are outstanding throughout the school.

- 3.16 Teaching enables pupils to become highly articulate. Skilled use of questioning techniques ensures that pupils' thinking is consistently challenged and pupils are able to evaluate their progress with clarity and insight. The enquiry-based approach to learning, which pupils find exciting and stimulating, is successfully embedded through the teaching. For example, younger pupils keenly embraced problem-solving opportunities during a practical mathematical capacity activity. Excellent planning ensures that the needs of all pupils are effectively met through challenging and inspiring work tailored to different levels of ability.
- 3.17 Following the recommendation of the previous inspection, the marking and assessment of pupils' work has improved. A new marking policy has been introduced and marking is now more consistent, although the policy is not yet fully embedded across the school. Marking includes next steps so that pupils know exactly how to make further progress. Pupils confidently ask staff for support with their work and value the systems of oral conferences and individual feedback; all agree that it helps them to make very good progress. Pupils have many opportunities to evaluate their own learning and that of their peers. Their progress is monitored through a rigorous system of assessment, which teachers successfully use to inform planning. A very small minority of pupils, in their pre-inspection questionnaire returns, felt that homework does not help them to make progress; inspection evidence does not support these views. During discussions, pupils and parents expressed their immense satisfaction with the amount and range of homework activities.
- 3.18 Teachers have excellent subject knowledge resulting in challenging, inspiring lessons with pace and purpose. They know pupils very well. Resources are well used in lessons, including some excellent use of ICT. Pupils greatly appreciate the practical hands-on activities, which help them to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding. Classroom assistants are employed effectively as part of a team and their excellent understanding of the pupils' learning styles enables them to have a significant impact on pupils' progress. Teaching approaches within each class for more able and gifted pupils are flexible and highly successful in matching pupils' ability levels, providing additional stimulation and challenge when needed.
- 3.19 Excellent individual support is provided for pupils with SEND or EAL in line with their IEPs. Additionally, external professionals help to ensure teaching is matched to pupils' needs. Children who have statements of special educational needs are extremely well supported. Excellent planning and review structures are in place to ensure the provision set out in the statement is fully met.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Through the positive yet calm ethos that pervades the school, it successfully meets its aim of developing happy, thoughtful, considerate, self-motivated learners who enjoy coming to school. From early in their school lives pupils learn to have responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. They develop a strong sense of self-esteem in response to the recognition they receive for their successes, both in class and in assemblies.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They have regular periods of reflection especially at the start of the day and in the 'peace areas' situated around the school. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to explore the natural world in the nearby park and on decking areas in every available place within the school building. For example, pupils expressed great delight in finding a ladybird larva; they listened reflectively to a new piece of music, demonstrating their developing appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils respond positively to the school's ethos of being secular but spiritually aware.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent and their behaviour is exemplary. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. Mutual respect is implicit in the school's high expectations of its pupils and raised voices are rare. Pupils are aware of the need for sanctions if they do not conform to rules, but they stress that this rarely happens because every pupil knows what is expected of them. They understand it is better to talk through an argument and know what it means to compromise. Many pupils manifest significant emotional maturity, for example in writing letters to national bodies in support of human rights.
- 4.5 The social awareness of pupils is excellent. Pupils behave in a courteous and considerate manner towards one another. As they progress through the school, there are appropriate opportunities such as flower helpers or 'special' helpers to take on added responsibilities, which pupils carry out with great diligence. The fundamental values of democracy are demonstrated regularly when pupils choose from among their number someone to represent the room, for example in an assembly. The twice-daily walk to the park enables further social awareness and pupils use their initiative to arrange fund-raising events such as cake sales. Visits from the police and other emergency services strongly reinforce the pupils' social awareness.
- 4.6 The cultural development of the pupils is excellent. They have respect for the Western cultural tradition through an extensive programme of trips and visits, such as excursions to theatres, art galleries and museums. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through celebrating festivals of all world religions and secular events. For example, male relatives are encouraged to come into school as a celebration of Fathers' Day. Pupils happily and confidently share their own cultural heritage with their peers during assembly and class presentations, which nurtures the school's extremely strong community feel.
- 4.7 Pupils grow in confidence and self-assurance so that by the time they leave the school, their personal development is excellent.

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

- 4.8 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Throughout all aspects of the school's life, staff provide excellent pastoral support for pupils in line with the school's aims. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are very positive. The staff know individual pupils very well and provide excellent personal support and guidance for them through the key person system.
- 4.10 Pupils are confident to seek help from any member of staff. Staff discuss any pupil concerns daily and these are sensitively handled. School council representatives receive training to be support monitors and the 'peace table' system is highly effective in enabling pupils to solve their own friendship problems.
- 4.11 Healthy lifestyles are strongly promoted. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses a small minority of pupils commented negatively about school food. Inspection evidence shows that, while limited in choice, meals have a healthy balance, and cater appropriately for all dietary requirements. The school makes excellent use of its outside spaces and the local park to promote extended physical exercise, alongside the planned programme for PE.
- 4.12 The school's policies and procedures to promote positive behaviour and guard against harassment and bullying are highly effective. A clear code of conduct and anti-bullying guidelines are displayed around the school, as well as guidance for pupils on what to do if they feel worried or sad. The schools 'I' statements, which enable pupils to develop excellent strategies on how to resolve their own conflicts, nurture a rich environment of care. Pupils appreciate and value the systems that reward good behaviour, work and effort. A small minority of pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that staff are not always fair in the way they give rewards and a few parents expressed concerns about the school's handling of bullying. Inspection evidence does not support these views. During discussions, pupils and parents commented that teachers are fair and confirmed that bullying incidences or poor behaviour are extremely rare. They feel that the school addresses any occurrences promptly and in a sensitive manner, taking due account of any related difficulty or disability.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.14 The school gives careful attention to the pupils' views. An enthusiastic, democratically elected school council meets regularly and practical suggestions are acted on by the school: this has resulted in increased extra-curricular activities and increased charity support. The school council also operates a suggestion box system that is very well used by the pupils.

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

- 4.15 Arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.16 These arrangements are fully in line with the aims of the school and provide high quality support for the pupils' personal development and welfare needs. All staff, including those with specific responsibilities for safeguarding, undertake comprehensive training in child protection. New staff induction procedures, including those for safeguarding, are rigorous. The school has suitable planning in place to implement recently revised statutory guidance and all staff, including non-teaching

staff, have attended relevant update training. The school has efficiently addressed the discrepancies in recruitment checks identified at the previous inspection; recruitment practices are now meticulous.

- 4.17 Arrangements for health and safety are excellent. Senior leaders regularly review health and safety policies and procedures; these documents provide staff with comprehensive guidance across all areas of the school's welfare provision. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; fire drills are practised regularly and appropriate records kept. Designated officers for fire safety receive additional training for their roles and staff have a clear understanding of emergency evacuation procedures. The regularly reviewed risk assessment audits are comprehensive and cover all aspects of school life, including for any off-site visits. Those staff with specific responsibilities for health and safety conduct daily checks on all areas of the school, which prioritise the pupils' safety, appropriately taking into account the school's city centre location.
- 4.18 Arrangements for pupils who become unwell or injure themselves whilst at school are excellent. Since the previous inspection, new medical facilities have been established. The newly instigated structure of welfare management provides excellent monitoring of medical practice and first aid records. Meticulous processes ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' individual medical needs, including those with SEND. All staff have appropriate first aid training and most are additionally trained in paediatric first aid. Registers for admission and attendance are suitably maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The school's sole proprietor, being the principal, is closely involved with all aspects of its day-to-day operation. This strongly focussed proprietorial governance ensures that the school is run fully in line with its published aims. The proprietor also exercises a thorough oversight of financial and strategic planning, aided by external scrutiny, and ensures investment in staff, accommodation and resources.
- 5.3 The proprietor seeks professional support and advice from external education organisations. An independent educational advisor exercises further strong support and challenge for the school's leadership and has a focused overview of the school's operational procedures and legal responsibilities. This system also ensures regular appraisal of the senior leadership and sets challenging targets. As there is no governing body, the school has appointed another figure as an independent panel convenor to arbitrate in the event of the school receiving a formal complaint. This is fully in line with the school's published policy and procedures.
- 5.4 The school's development plan is highly detailed and presents challenging priorities for future development, demonstrating an extremely strong vision for the school's future strategic and educational direction.
- 5.5 The proprietorial governance has an extremely strong focus on health and safety and child protection measures to ensure the welfare of all pupils. Policies and procedures are regularly scrutinised and this includes a comprehensive annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements in addition to an annual audit by external agencies. The proprietor exercises stringent oversight of staff appointments and associated regulatory checks. The regulatory discrepancy within the single central register identified by the previous inspection has been appropriately addressed.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.7 The cohesive working partnership of the leadership and management teams across both school sites strongly promotes the aims of the school. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, including for safeguarding arrangements ensures that the pupils' safety and welfare is given high priority. All documents are thoroughly and regularly reviewed, and staff and parents made aware of any procedural updates. This demonstrates the high level of commitment that senior leaders and managers have towards discharging their responsibilities to ensure the well-being of pupils of all ages.
- 5.8 The senior leadership and management provide a clear educational direction. This is clearly reflected in the pupils' excellent levels of achievement and their high standards in personal development. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a very small minority of parents expressed concerns about the

leadership and management of the school. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Senior leaders and managers have established extremely strong systems to monitor quality of teaching. The programme includes observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' workbooks and undertaking curriculum planning reviews. This robust practice ensures high quality educational experiences for pupils. The premises are well maintained and resourced appropriately for the ages of the pupils who attend.

- 5.9 The school's leadership has a strong vision for its future development. Self-evaluation processes are rigorous and meticulously identify the schools' strengths and targets for further improvement. Senior management and staff meetings, alongside feedback from parents and suggestions from pupils, all make a significant contribution to evaluation systems. These views are carefully considered and appropriately incorporated into development planning processes. Priorities are clearly defined and there is a strongly identified timescale of achievement and success criteria. Developments since the previous inspection have significantly improved the quality of the educational and welfare provision and have met the recommendation about marking and assessment.
- 5.10 The leadership is successful in recruiting high quality staff who have suitable experience for their respective roles and the distinctive teaching ethos of the school. The staffing mix brings a rich breadth of new ideas, which successfully enhances the teaching and learning approaches. Management ensures that the relatively high turnover of staff, for example, through overseas staff returning home, does not affect pupils' progress, achievements and personal well-being. The staff appraisal system is highly effective in supporting their continuing professional development. This includes visits to other educational settings to observe good practice. Additionally staff have access to a good range of training opportunities to advance their teaching knowledge and expertise. The school provides good opportunities for new staff to further their professional qualifications. Induction processes and job descriptions clearly define lines of accountability and ensure that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities, including those for health and safety and ensuring the pupils' welfare. Documentation, such as the staff handbook provides staff with useful additional information about school protocol and routines.
- 5.11 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses and during discussions, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school and its ethos, and the support provided for their children. They welcome the school's open door policy and the wealth of informal and formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress. These include the weekly open mornings, afternoon parents' meetings and the home-school diary. The school is assiduous in working in partnership with parents and professionals. Parents of gifted pupils or those identified with SEND or EAL are fully involved in discussions about their child's individual educational needs.
- 5.12 The school maintains highly constructive relationships with parents, in accordance with its published aims. In their pre-inspection questionnaire returns nearly all parents were pleased with the progress their children make. They comment that their children are very well looked after and safe at school. A very small minority of parents expressed some dissatisfaction with the school's handling of concerns, the availability of information and the timeliness of responses to their questions; inspection evidence does not support these views. The school follows its published procedures for handling complaints meticulously. The external, independent panel convener successfully provides external mediation for complaints. All staff, including

senior leaders and managers, are easily contactable and respond promptly to any questions or concerns that parents raise. Comprehensive records are kept for all meetings, whether formal or informal, detailing the strategies discussed, timescale for review and subsequent outcomes.

- 5.13 The detailed weekly newsletter provides comprehensive information for parents on all aspects of school life and includes contributions from each class teacher. Parents are highly appreciative of the parent portal and the email communications. The website, with electronic prospectuses for both school sites, provides new parents with an excellent introduction to the school. All relevant information for current and prospective parents, including school policies, is available on the website as well as being available at the school. A very informative parents' handbook communicates the school's aims, ethos and expectations most effectively.
- 5.14 Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in the life of the school and frequently participate in a wide variety of ways. For example, they offer their professional expertise to enrich the pupils' learning experiences, attend assemblies and help on trips and sports day events. Parents are highly appreciative of these opportunities and are very keen to participate. In addition, the school organises helpful termly workshops for parents on different aspects of learning, and holds termly class coffee mornings to enable parents to meet together in school.
- 5.15 Parents receive regular high quality written reports twice a year. The reports clearly identify their children's work and progress and future targets for improvement. Additionally the reports show a detailed knowledge and understanding of each individual pupil's academic and personal development.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, including those with SEND or EAL. Staff have a secure understanding of the EYFS requirements, and deliver the curriculum extremely well. This enables the majority of children to make good or better progress in all areas of learning.
- 6.2 Staff encourage children from an early age to become independent and investigative learners by enabling them to select their own activities. They provide excellent support and challenge through questioning which is varied to suit each child's needs. For example, staff effectively promote the youngest children's problem-solving skills by encouraging them to work out the date. Knowledgeable staff successfully create a culture whereby all children give of their best. They expertly provide a vibrant and stimulating learning environment, which enthuses and motivates children to learn. For example, specialist science teaching stimulates children's investigative skills and enquiring minds. These experiences prepare children highly effectively for their next stages in learning.
- 6.3 Thorough staff planning enables them to meet individual children's needs and interests. Before children join the setting, detailed information about them is gathered and systems to track children's progress enable staff to plan for their future learning experiences accurately. As a result children are provided with highly appropriate challenge for their ability, enabling all children to make considerable progress from their starting points.
- 6.4 Staff foster highly positive relationships with parents. Welcome meetings and home visits help build relationships and there is regular dialogue between home and the setting. Parents feel that they have excellent opportunities to become involved in the life of the setting. For example, parents' visits to talk about their jobs enrich the curriculum by providing first-hand experiences for children. Parents are provided with excellent ongoing information about their child's progress. Parents of younger children receive comprehensive progress check information. Parents of all EYFS children receive highly detailed annual reports and frequent opportunities to meet with their child's key person, both formally and informally.

6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 6.5 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding.
- 6.6 A highly successful key person system is in place across the EYFS which helps children form positive relationships with the staff who care for them. Younger children separate from their carers extremely well and keenly engage with their key person who greets them warmly. Older children excitedly share their news from home with their key person. Children of all ages demonstrate that they are happy and secure whilst at school.
- 6.7 Staff care for the children for whom they are responsible, and do their utmost to ensure that they enjoy their experiences whilst in the setting. Children are confident

in their surroundings, moving freely between inside and outside areas. Staff are excellent role models, who engage children in meaningful conversations from an early age. They foster imaginative development by engaging in children's role play. For example, staff buy fruit and vegetables from children pretending to be shop keepers. Behaviour of children is of a high standard; they demonstrate great self-control whilst working independently and co-operatively with their friends.

- 6.8 Through the curriculum and their everyday experiences, children learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They understand how it is important to eat healthy food, and are able to explain that their food contains vitamins. They take responsibility for their own personal hygiene, with older children independently cleaning their teeth after meals. Children enjoy being outdoors in the fresh air where they have access to plentiful activities that develop their physical skills. Younger children enjoy crawling through play tunnels, and older children climb on apparatus with growing confidence.
- 6.9 Arrangements to prepare children for their move to their next class are excellent, appropriately involving parents. For the youngest children, care is taken to develop relationships with their new key person before they move.

6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 6.10 Leadership and management of the early years' provision is outstanding.
- 6.11 The proprietorial governance shows a thorough understanding of the EYFS requirements. The setting's leadership and management have an excellent overview of planning, practice and assessment across the EYFS.
- 6.12 Responses to the pre-inspection parental questionnaire were extremely positive. A very large majority of parents are highly satisfied with the EYFS and state that their children are happy and feel safe whilst at school. They are pleased with their child's progress and the range of learning experiences offered. A very small minority of parents expressed concerns about the school's handling of bullying, and the quality of leadership and management. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Incidents of any kind are addressed quickly and professionally; all are well documented. The leadership team provides high levels of support for the management of the EYFS, enabling the successful running of the day-to-day provision. The setting is split across the two school sites and effective communication between staff means that the continuity of practice is ensured.
- 6.13 Systems for safeguarding and welfare are exemplary and meticulously documented. Staff attend regular training updates and know what to do if a concern arises. This helps keep children safe from harm. Sufficient staff have paediatric first aid training. Health and safety systems are rigorous and include effective processes for assessing risk. The school has successfully met the regulatory requirement of the previous inspection; procedures for checking the suitability of staff are thoroughly undertaken.
- 6.14 The leadership and management have an excellent overview of the EYFS. They evaluate the setting's practice thoroughly and this information informs plans for future development although the views of all staff are not always included in this process. Excellent monitoring systems mean that staff have a wealth of opportunities to develop their practice and discuss children's welfare and well-being. Since the previous inspection, staff peer observations have been further developed. The leadership and management actively encourage staff to gain additional

qualifications, and further their professional development. As a result, the setting has an extremely well qualified staff. They feel well supported in their personal development, which enhances children's experiences considerably.

- 6.15 Excellent partnerships exist between the setting and external agencies. For example, the setting has been involved in piloting innovative EYFS approaches. The setting has effective links with local agencies for further support and guidance. External specialists, such as speech therapists provide support to children who require additional intervention.

6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 6.16 The overall quality and standards of the early years' provision is outstanding.
- 6.17 Overall, children achieve highly and make significant progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points, including those with SEND or EAL. The majority of children meet the expected levels of development for their age, with most exceeding these expectations. Children are extremely well prepared for their next stages in education. The youngest children show an interest in printed matter and are beginning to initiate their own games with other children. Older children demonstrate excellent literacy and numeracy skills. For example, they apply their growing phonetic knowledge to spell words and write sentences, and competently solve mathematical addition questions up to 10. Children demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the world. During discussions, they confidently identified the continent where the Amazon rainforest is found and described the animals found there. Children have excellent opportunities to develop skills in ICT; for example, younger children use phones and laptops in their role-play, and older children confidently use programmable toys.
- 6.18 Across the EYFS, children display high levels of personal development for their age. They are confident, independent learners who are extremely happy in their environment. Children proudly take on roles of responsibility, such as being the special helper, who brings and prepares class snacks. Older children offer to clear plates at lunchtime, and younger children ask to be excused from the table. Children feel very well supported and safe and know who to turn to should they need assistance.
- 6.19 Arrangements for children's safeguarding and welfare are given high priority, and are fully embedded in everyday practice. The previous inspection recommendation has been successfully addressed and more able children are now presented with appropriate challenge. Leadership and management have a very strong vision for the setting's continual improvement, to enhance children's life chances.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.