



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**THE ROWANS SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## The Rowans School

Full Name of School	<b>The Rowans School</b>
DfE Number	<b>315/6002</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>310024</b>
Address	<b>The Rowans School 19 Drax Avenue Wimbledon London SW20 0EG</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8946 8220</b>
Email Address	<b>office@rowans.org.uk</b>
Head Teacher	<b>Mrs Suzie Wingrove</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Penny Hughes</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 7</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>121</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (82 boys; 39 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 65    5-7: 56</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Miss Lizzie Spratt</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>15 Oct 2013 to 18 Oct 2013</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous inspection was carried out by Ofsted in October 2008.

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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Jan Preece

Mrs Pauline Bennett-Mills

Ms Lucy Sumner

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Rowans is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from three to seven years. It was founded in 1936 and in 2002 was acquired by the Corporation of King's College School. The school has charitable status and governance is discharged by the governing body of King's College School. The school is situated in a large house set in its own gardens and grounds, on the edge of Wimbledon Common. Since the previous inspection by Ofsted, a new head teacher was appointed in 2011.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection there were 121 pupils on roll: 82 boys and 39 girls. Of these, 65 children were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 56 pupils were in Years 1 and 2. Children enter in the term in which they turn three years of age, and nine children currently attend part-time in the younger Nursery class. The 24 children in the older Nursery class have the option of staying for a full day for four days of the week. Those in the two Reception classes attend full-time. Children gain places in the older and younger Nursery classes on a first come, first served basis. From Reception they are assessed by observation at a play session and a report from their current nursery or school.
- 1.3 The majority of the pupils live within the locality. Most are from white British backgrounds and some are from other ethnic groups. Very few pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), though additional support is available if necessary. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Of the fourteen pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), two receive additional support in school. The ability profile of the school is above the national average, and some pupils have well above average ability.
- 1.4 The school aims to enable each pupil to achieve high standards in all areas of learning by providing challenging and inspiring teaching. It seeks to develop independent, confident, enthusiastic learners in a safe, supportive and enriching environment, so that they acquire life skills and a social awareness to enable all to give the best of themselves. The school strives to offer a broad and stimulating curriculum and extra-curricular activities, which will nurture each pupil's well-being and so enhance a love of learning.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school for Years 1 and 2, and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery (rising 3)
Kindergarten	Nursery (ages 3 to 4)
Reception	Reception

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims and offers an excellent educational experience to its pupils. Teaching of a consistently high standard is a significant factor in promoting the excellent achievement of pupils throughout the school. Consequently, pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, make good, and in some cases, rapid progress in relation to their abilities and starting points, as a result of committed support by all staff. The additional challenge received by more able pupils promotes their progress well. The school offers a broad and interesting curriculum that includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits. Pupils' excellent and positive attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their overall achievement. They are enthusiastic, enjoy challenge and are keen to work both independently and collaboratively.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent throughout the school. Pupils of all ages are self-confident and secure in their relationships with adults and their peers. They are articulate and courteous, and take pride in their achievements, such as their support of charitable causes. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they enjoy taking responsibility. They are developing a strong sense of their own and others' cultural traditions. By the time they leave, they are well prepared to move to their next schools, due to the school's careful measures to promote their self-reliance and independence. Excellent arrangements for both pastoral care and to safeguard and promote their welfare, health and safety contribute strongly to pupils' well-being.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent overall. Governors employ effective oversight of the school and have ensured that all regulatory requirements are fully implemented. The leadership does not have direct representation to the governing body. The quality of leadership and management, including that in the EYFS, is excellent and includes exceptionally strong links with parents, who are happy with all aspects of the school's provision. The leadership's clear vision is very well communicated amongst staff. Since the previous inspection, the establishment of a senior management team and subject co-ordinators has resulted in curricular documentation of high quality and exceptionally effective monitoring of teaching and learning, as well as the implementation of new initiatives. Particular strengths are the commitment and teamwork of the whole staff, including those in non-teaching roles, and the strong communication and co-operation between staff at all levels to ensure that all pupils' needs are identified and addressed.
- 2.4 The recommendations of the previous inspection, to further develop the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across all subjects, to develop independent learning skills in the EYFS and to use information from EYFS assessments more rigorously to sharpen the identification of children's starting points, have all been successfully implemented.

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

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

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

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

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that future arrangements for governance include direct representation from the school's leadership, to enable greater support, challenge and stimulus for improvement.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 In accordance with the school's aims, pupils enjoy their time in school and achieve high standards. Their overall achievements are supported by consistently strong teaching and their highly positive attitudes towards learning.
- 3.3 Pupils of all ages express themselves confidently and use a wide vocabulary, and in the EYFS children are confident in their interactions with adults. A recent focus on handwriting and reading in the EYFS has already brought conspicuous improvements in standards. Children in the older Nursery class begin to recognise some letter sounds and enjoy sharing books with adults. Pupils continue to make rapid progress, so that many read fluently for their age. Younger Nursery children begin to recognise their names and make marks with chalks. Pupils' manual dexterity improves, so that by Year 2, they write in neat cursive script. Throughout the school, pupils display excellent listening skills and consequently follow instructions well. By the age of seven, pupils' writing is exceptionally competent. The more able exhibit a secure command of grammar and complex spellings and an ability to evoke a mood in their descriptive writing. In addition to creative writing of high quality, pupils' imagination and creativity are well expressed in their art and design and technology, as well as in extra-curricular activities such as musical drama.
- 3.4 Pupils develop strong reasoning skills, as when they solve and write riddles or explore themes in religious education (RE). Through the many opportunities given for cross-curricular work, they acquire good general knowledge and make connections in their learning. Throughout the school, numeracy standards are high and applied capably to solve problems and record scientific investigations. Many children in Reception are able to insert numbers onto a number line to 20 and can write recognisable number symbols. Pupils' ability to use ICT to support their learning has improved since the previous inspection. In the EYFS, children use programmable toys, and across the school, pupils use interactive whiteboards and tablet computers confidently to record their learning and for research. They develop excellent physical skills and agility in physical education (PE) and games.
- 3.5 Pupils develop their individual interests and abilities in the many extra-curricular opportunities available. They compete successfully in sports fixtures and tournaments in football, hockey and athletics. Those who attend fencing club gain recognised certificates, and pupils who learn the violin or piano are successful in external instrumental examinations. All pupils enjoy the regular opportunities they are given to perform before an audience. Pupils in Year 2 recently performed *The Wind in the Willows* and also took responsibility for every aspect of its staging and production.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available from lesson observations, scrutiny of their work and conversations with them, it is judged to be excellent. In the EYFS children make at least good, and often excellent, progress in their learning and development, relative to their starting points and abilities, as a result of staff adapting provision according to their individual needs. Nationally standardised progress data for older children in 2012 indicates that they make progress that is good in relation to

the average for pupils of similar above, or well above average, abilities. Consequently when they leave, their attainment is above that expected for pupils of similar age. Pupils with SEND or EAL make good progress in relation to their abilities due to the early identification of any difficulties, sympathetic support by staff in class and individual provision where appropriate. Those who are particularly able achieve well through being given additional challenge in class commensurate with their abilities. This enables them to be successful in competitive entrance examinations to their next schools.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to their learning are excellent. They respond eagerly to the many challenges offered in lessons, and enthusiastically commented that although they find certain tasks tricky, they are fun. The pupils work hard and concentrate well when working independently. They collaborate well and readily show appreciation of others' success. Their high standards of behaviour strongly support the establishment of a good working ethos in the classroom, and excellent relationships with staff and their peers have a positive impact on their progress. From the EYFS onwards, they are fully engaged in interesting and challenging activities and investigations, take pride in their achievements and become confident learners, able to think independently.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum fulfils the school's aim to offer a broad, stimulating programme that includes a variety of extra-curricular activities. It is well suited to the abilities, ages and interests of the pupils, and strongly supports their overall achievement. The EYFS setting makes excellent provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Carefully planned educational programmes, covering all areas of the EYFS curriculum, provide the children with a wide variety of opportunities to reach, and in some cases, exceed, expected levels of development. The well-planned outdoor area is easily accessible to all children and provides a stimulating and richly resourced extension to their indoor learning, across all areas.
- 3.10 In addition to the subjects of the National Curriculum, the school offers French to pupils from Reception upwards and music is taught by a specialist for all age groups. Provision for personal, social and health education is enhanced by the exploration by each class of a word of the month, which strongly promotes the development of pupils' values. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, the school has improved arrangements for ICT considerably, including the provision of interactive whiteboards in each classroom and tablet computers, which are used throughout the curriculum highly effectively. A particular strength is the increasing use of cross-curricular links, which ensures that pupils receive a firm foundation of subject knowledge and skills in literacy, writing and mathematics, whilst also facilitating the development of their creative, expressive and physical abilities. The time allocated for PE and games, together with specialist teaching throughout the school, enables pupils to develop good physical skills and fosters their enthusiasm for sport.
- 3.11 Effective provision for pupils with SEND or EAL promotes their good progress. Pupils identified as having particular learning needs receive additional interventions and their progress is carefully monitored. Those who require more intensive support are offered individual sessions with a specialist teacher and given an individual education plan, which is shared with parents and reviewed regularly. Pupils

identified as particularly able receive additional challenge in class and through extra-curricular activities.

- 3.12 Curricular documentation is comprehensive and of consistent quality. Since the previous inspection, all schemes of work have been revised and a clear curricular overview now ensures progression in learning. Subject co-ordinators monitor provision through lesson observations and scrutiny of samples of pupils' work, to ensure that all curricular areas offer consistently high quality learning experiences. The school ensures that, whilst retaining breadth in the curriculum, pupils are carefully prepared for entrance examinations. Parents appreciate the guidance given to support pupils in their choice of future school.
- 3.13 Pupils of all ages benefit from taking their learning outside into the attractive and well-equipped grounds. The curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that take place at lunchtimes and after school. The pupils greatly appreciate the varied programme, which includes sports, chess, cookery and creative activities, many of which are available from Reception upwards. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in whole-school productions, as well as class and house assemblies, and violin and piano lessons are also offered.
- 3.14 Pupils' experiences are further broadened by a wide range of visitors and visits to places of interest. These include speakers from the charities they are supporting, parents who talk about their professions and cultural traditions, and organised workshops. Pupils benefit from productive and increasing links with the local community. For example, they take part in sporting fixtures with other local schools, participate in carol singing for a local charity and perform concerts for the elderly. They raise money for many charitable causes, for example to provide play equipment for a local hospital, and they visit police and fire stations.

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

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 Teaching is highly effective in promoting the pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school to enable all pupils to achieve in all areas of learning and to develop as independent, confident, enthusiastic learners. Teaching is enthusiastic and well paced due to teachers' excellent subject knowledge. It includes ample opportunities for practical investigation, discussion, reasoning and research. The contexts of lessons are consistently made relevant to the pupils' interests, and ensure that even routine skills are taught and revised in an engaging way. Teachers very effectively use targeted questions to challenge and stimulate deep thinking. All staff have very high expectations, evident in their scrutiny of pupils' work and in lesson observations. Their lessons are exceptionally well planned.
- 3.17 In the EYFS, staff work very closely with parents and outside agencies to provide outstanding support for children with SEND. They plan carefully together to ensure that the setting meets its aims to educate the whole child and to provide an environment that is welcoming, safe and stimulating. Staff use individual interests and needs as starting points and support all children; those with SEND or EAL acquire the necessary skills to move on to the next stage of their development. All children are given many opportunities to work independently, which addresses a recommendation of the previous inspection. Extension activities provide suitable challenge for more able children. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 have an excellent knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and adapt their teaching and

planning accordingly. This ensures that all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, make good and often rapid progress, especially in English and mathematics, due to well-targeted support and appropriate tasks. Challenging and lively tasks for the most able pupils were a feature in every lesson observed.

- 3.18 Teaching is supported by resources of excellent quality and variety, although the library lacks sufficient recent non-fiction books. Teachers, including in the EYFS, make very creative use of resources, including ICT. The interactive whiteboards are used extensively to engage pupils' interest and to clarify teaching. Tablet computers are in frequent use, for example in identifying key moments from a story to make into a book, recording learning or drafting sports reports for the newsletter. Teachers often devise their own skilful resources to stimulate the pupils' interests and enhance their excitement about what they are learning. All classrooms are very well organised and brightly decorated with excellent displays, incorporating both the pupils' work and stimulus from teachers. The learning environment is therefore both supportive and enriching.
- 3.19 Assessment procedures have improved since the previous inspection. Staff in the EYFS are fully aware of the children's individual abilities through regular observations and assessment of their progress. This allows for careful consideration of their next steps. Building on assessment information from the EYFS, pupils' attainment is regularly assessed using a range of standardised tests, particularly in mathematics, English, reading and reasoning. The school is making increasing use of this information to identify those who require additional support and those who are more able, and to closely monitor the pupils' progress, although this system is at an early stage of implementation. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work, and teachers continue the EYFS practice of observational assessment. Teachers praise pupils for their efforts and give positive feedback verbally and in written form in their books. Marking is of high quality and is constructive. In addition to offering praise and encouragement, much includes helpful comments so that pupils know how to improve their work.

## **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 accordance with its aim, the school provides pupils with a safe, supportive and enriching environment where they display confidence, independence and enthusiasm. In the EYFS, children's personal and emotional development is excellent. They co-operate well, sharing resources, taking turns and organising themselves effectively. Children understand the school's expectations and their behaviour is exemplary. The youngest children are able to join in 'circle time' activities and express their preferences regarding colours and food. Older Nursery children investigate facial expressions and emotions using mirrors and photographs. They are able to describe their experiences confidently, for example their celebration of the festival of Eid. Older children listen to each other with respect and interest, recognising that they each have different needs and experiences. They have good manners and are able to ask for help from their friends and adults when necessary.
- 4.3 Older pupils demonstrate well-developed spiritual awareness. In conversations with inspectors, they said that they are very happy and enjoy their experience at school. Pupils develop self-confidence at an excellent level for their age in the many opportunities they have to take part in productions, assemblies and extra-curricular activities. Assemblies engender a strong, warm feeling of community. Pupils' positive feelings of self-worth are evident in weekly celebration assemblies where a wide range of achievement, both in and out of school, is acknowledged and affirmed. Displays in each classroom demonstrate pupils' awareness of non-material values such as honesty, thankfulness and friendship, recording their reflection on the school's word of the month. Pupils in Year 2 exhibit mature thinking as they explore the difference between facts and beliefs.
- 4.4 Pupils display a keen moral sense. They are invariably well behaved and in conversations with inspectors were able to explain the school's 'golden rules', which they were involved in devising. Pupils appreciate that rules promote good order and safety for everyone in their school community. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for making choices and to find a solution to a problem. They articulate a sense of fairness and right and wrong appropriate to their age, and are aware that there are consequences of their own and others' actions.
- 4.5 Pupils' social awareness is excellent. They offer sensible suggestions for fund raising to support their chosen charities and are aware that they can make a difference to the lives of those who are less fortunate. The monitors and house captains take their responsibilities seriously, as when they show visitors around the school and check that younger children are happy at break times. Pupils of all ages enjoy being part of a house, and take pride in gaining house points and competing in inter-house events. Pupils demonstrate a developing mature capacity to recognise their own strengths as they evaluate their own work and that of their peers.
- 4.6 Pupils display strong cultural awareness. They develop an age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of some of the practices of the major world religions through RE lessons, assemblies and talks from parents and their peers about festivals, such as Diwali and Eid. Pupils gain an understanding of the shaping of British history from their visits to places of interest such as Leeds Castle and the

Ragged School Museum, and their awareness of another western culture is enhanced by their French lessons.

- 4.7 In the EYFS, transition to the next class, or to and from other settings, is carefully planned, ensuring that children are ready for the change and feel happy and secure. Throughout the EYFS, children develop independence in their personal needs; for example, younger Nursery children can put on their coats independently. The school prepares older pupils for greater independence through visits to theatres, other schools and places of interest. They develop their self-reliance during an outdoor learning experience day, and are ready to move on at the end of Year 2.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school fulfils its aims to nurture the well-being of every pupil in a safe, supportive and enriching environment. Pastoral care permeates throughout the school, beginning with the staff, whose cohesive relationships enable strong mutual support. Staff know all the pupils very well and form extremely strong relationships so that pupils share their thoughts and ideas confidently. They feel that they can approach and seek reassurance from any adult in the school. In the EYFS, provision for the children's well-being is excellent. Children feel safe, happy and emotionally secure, and key people are very good role models for considerate, caring behaviour. Across the school, excellent lines of communication are maintained through 'child forum' meetings, held regularly to discuss individual pupils' needs and to help them overcome any difficulties within the classroom or in their relationships. Communication with parents is highly effective through the use of a 'home link' book, and the pupils feel secure in the knowledge that the key adults in their lives are working together.
- 4.10 The school strongly encourages pupils' positive behaviour, which is always recognised and celebrated. The pupils contribute to and discuss classroom rules. They are given responsibilities such as 'special helper', and self-appraisal and self-discipline are encouraged during 'circle time' and in assemblies. The house system encourages the pupils to be responsible and work collaboratively with their peers. The school's policy to guard against harassment and bullying is very effective. In discussion with pupils, they understood the concepts of unkindness and bullying, and reported that there is no bullying in the school. This view was also supported by parents. Instances of unkindness and disagreements are dealt with and resolved swiftly, fairly and effectively.
- 4.11 A healthy lifestyle is promoted from the EYFS onwards through classroom and outdoor activities and gentle reinforcement from adults. Reception children can explain the importance of drinking water and washing hands, and older pupils can identify healthy foods. Lunch and snack times are happy, social occasions. The school provides clear guidelines, for example allergenic foods to avoid. The pupils are given many opportunities to take regular exercise through PE, the use of the outdoor play area and an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, such as fencing, swimming and tag rugby. Participation in sport outside school is positively encouraged through celebrating pupils' achievements in assembly.
- 4.12 The pupils are given very good opportunities to express their views and feelings. As staff are very approachable, they do so confidently. The school has a

comprehensive plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and is well prepared to implement this if the need arises.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 Throughout the school, the pupils' happiness, health and safety are of prime importance and careful attention to their well-being contributes strongly to their personal development. Thorough arrangements, which are implemented most efficiently, ensure that pupils work and play in a safe environment, in line with the school's aims. Robust safeguarding arrangements, including in the EYFS, are well monitored by the governor appointed to oversee child protection. All staff and any volunteers receive regular safeguarding training, in line with statutory requirements and appropriate to their levels of responsibility. The safe recruitment of staff is undertaken rigorously and all checks are recorded correctly.
- 4.15 The school ensures that all necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are in place. A fire risk assessment is undertaken at suitable intervals and its recommendations are implemented promptly. Fire drills take place regularly and all staff have received fire safety training, including at a higher level for those who are fire marshals. The school has a systematic programme to ensure that electrical equipment is maintained regularly.
- 4.16 Arrangements to review and implement the school's health and safety policy are comprehensive and effective. A health and safety committee meets each term and reports to the King's College School health and safety advisory committee. Detailed risk assessments are maintained for all areas of school life and staff make regular checks to ensure that any potential hazards are removed. The school has suitable accommodation for pupils who become ill or are injured. Records of any accidents and first aid are meticulously kept, together with those for any medication that is administered at school. The first-aid policy provides staff with clear and practical guidance, and many staff have first-aid and paediatric first-aid qualifications commensurate with their responsibilities. The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately and correctly stored for three years.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent overall.
- 5.2 The governing body, which administers the four schools that comprise the King's College Foundation, encompasses a wide range of experience and expertise. Governors are very committed to supporting the school in achieving high standards of teaching and pastoral care, which ensures that the school's aims are successfully realised. Governance is well organised to enable effective oversight of the work and educational standards of the school, including the EYFS. The main governing body delegates aspects of its work to sub-committees, and several governors undertake responsibility for specific areas such as child protection and health and safety. Governors' prudent financial management has enabled a rolling programme of improvement and the provision of good resources to support teaching and learning, as well as generous staffing arrangements.
- 5.3 The governing body is well informed about the school's successes and challenges through comprehensive reports prepared each term by the leadership. However, the school has no direct representation at governors' meetings. A governor with particular responsibility for the school visits regularly to talk with staff and the leadership, and provides excellent support, including to the EYFS, although other governors are infrequent visitors. The governing body successfully fulfils its responsibilities for monitoring compliance with statutory requirements in relation to health and safety, recruitment and safeguarding. The governor with designated responsibility for safeguarding maintains close oversight of these matters. For example, she holds meetings with staff to monitor their understanding of the school's safeguarding policy prior to preparing a report for the governors' annual review of the policy and its implementation.

### **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 excellent.
- 5.5 The high quality of the educational experience offered to the pupils throughout the school, together with their excellent personal development, indicates that the leadership is exceptionally successful in ensuring that the school's aims are fulfilled. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were unanimous in their satisfaction with the leadership and management of the school.
- 5.6 Leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent. Staff employ highly effective and rigorous systems of self-evaluation. Senior managers make regular observations to monitor the quality of provision, in order to identify areas for development and support the staff. The EYFS has a clear development plan that shows a commitment to evaluating practice and continuous improvement. This has enabled the setting to carry out the recommendations of the previous inspection. Staff hold regular meetings to discuss and evaluate individual children, as well as the department's strengths and areas that need development. These, together with parents' opinions, inform detailed development planning, which sets clear targets. The recently introduced supervision arrangements have given staff a valuable

opportunity to reflect on their own practice. The EYFS setting is a warm, stimulating and safe environment where safeguarding of the children is given high priority. The relocation of the Nursery and the development of the outside areas have resulted in a more cohesive department with improved transitions. Staff value continuous professional development highly and make excellent use of training courses offered by the local authority and other providers to develop and extend their knowledge and skills. Very close partnerships with the local authority, other outside agencies and parents support the EYFS setting's development and the needs of individual children exceptionally well.

- 5.7 The leadership's vision has been successfully formulated into a comprehensive school development plan, supported by well-written action plans for each area of the curriculum. Since the previous inspection, a senior management team has been established. This has ensured that new initiatives have progressed through careful monitoring and provision of advice and support where needed. The leadership's vision is very well communicated and supported by staff at all levels, resulting in clear educational direction throughout the school. A particular strength of management is the commitment and teamwork of the whole staff, including those in non-teaching roles. Teachers' and teaching assistants' contributions are equally valued and appreciated. Since the previous inspection, subject co-ordinator roles have been developed. These staff have prepared thorough curricular documentation that promotes excellent teaching and has raised pupils' achievements. Teaching and learning are monitored highly effectively through the monitoring of teachers' planning and formal and informal lesson observations, including some by subject co-ordinators, as well as through regular scrutiny of samples of pupils' work by senior managers. All policies are regularly and rigorously reviewed to take into account changes in legislation, and their implementation is carefully monitored by the leadership. The priority given to welfare and safety ensures that pupils are cared for in a welcoming, safe and supportive environment. The school receives useful ICT, human resources and maintenance support from King's College School.
- 5.8 New staff undertake a thorough induction process to ensure that they understand their responsibilities and are familiar with key school policies. All staff undergo appraisal, which encourages incisive evaluation of practice and has been successful in promoting the quality of teaching. Generous staffing levels ensure that pupils receive the individual support they need; staff are well qualified and encouraged to undertake further study. Staff keep their skills up to date through regular whole-school training, the records of which are meticulously kept, including for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety throughout the school. Staff recruitment checks are carried out rigorously and recorded thoroughly. Communication and co-operation amongst staff at all levels are excellent due to regular, focused meetings and the effective use of the school's intranet.
- 5.9 The school maintains excellent links with parents. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that parents are highly supportive of and particularly happy with the school's care for their children, how well the staff, including the leadership, know the children and the individual attention their children are given. Parents are also very satisfied with the quantity and quality of communication they receive. Inspection evidence supports the parents' views of the school. Concerns of parents are handled sensitively and swiftly, and the close links with parents ensure that most difficulties are resolved informally. A complaints policy outlining the formal procedure is available, if needed.

- 5.10 The very active and successful events committee is highly valued by parents. They enjoy the events and activities that are organised, saying that these help them to feel part of the whole-school community and give them an opportunity to raise funds. Parents make regular contributions to the wider curriculum by demonstrating their skills and specialist knowledge. They are encouraged to watch matches or attend plays and concerts. In the EYFS, parents are able to share and contribute observations of their children's learning and achievements to the setting's detailed records, and derive first-hand experience of their children's learning at 'stay and play' and 'drop-in' sessions. Curriculum evenings further deepen the parents' understanding of teaching and learning at school and enable them to support their children's learning at home.
- 5.11 All the required information for parents of current and prospective pupils is made available. Parents are very pleased with the information they receive about the school and its policies, and the school has an informative website and prospectus. The parents' handbook and appendices produced for each stage of their children's development provide details of what is expected of parents and the shared role they can play in their children's education. These are supplemented by termly letters and curriculum planning for each year group. Parents enjoy receiving the weekly newsletters that describe the many activities taking place. They have daily contact with the staff at drop-off and collection times.
- 5.12 In the EYFS, well-presented reports provide parents with very good information about their children's progress and achievement in relation to the EYFS assessment criteria. The highly effective partnership with parents of children in the setting ensures that children are given appropriate care and education using internal resources or external agencies as necessary. Reports for older pupils present a clear picture of their progress and provide targets for further improvement, both academically and socially. Parents also have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress at twice-yearly parent-teacher consultations. Daily contact is maintained through the 'home link' books, in which concerns or questions can be noted and acted upon quickly, and reading records between home and school allow for a shared approach to reading.

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