



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MOON HALL COLLEGE AT BURYS COURT

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Moon Hall College at Burys Court
DfE Number	936/6251
Registered Charity Number	803481
Address	Moon Hall College at Burys Court Flanchford Road Leigh Reigate Surrey RH2 8RE
Telephone Number	01306 611372
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Email Address	principal@moonhallcollege.co.uk
Head	Mrs Berry Baker
Chair of Governors	Mr David Sherman Baker
Age Range	3 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	88
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (58 boys; 30 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 26 3-5 (EYFS): 4 11-16: 58
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Helen Baker
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	09 Oct 2012 to 12 Oct 2012

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection for association accreditation status was in January 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Lady Fiona Mynors

Mr Andrew Hampton

Miss Jacqueline Scotney

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Moon Hall College at Burys Court educates boys and girls aged between three and sixteen. It was founded in 2005 by the Moon Hall Schools Educational Trust, a non-denominational Christian foundation. It is a company limited by guarantee, and provides a mainstream education for pupils who have specific learning difficulties, predominantly severe dyslexia. The head is one of the original founders, and the governing body includes the trustees of the charitable trust. The school is based in a Victorian house with additional buildings, set in its own grounds in the countryside near Reigate. Burys Court comprises the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and pupils in Years 1 to 6. Moon Hall College caters for pupils in Years 7 to 11. They are managed as one school.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has been broadened, and an outdoor woodland learning area for younger pupils has been developed. The school's programme of refurbishment has continued: a new kitchen is in place, and a teaching room for food technology has been created. The school aims to provide a vibrant learning environment for pupils, many of whom have had difficulties in previous schools, in which to acquire basic literacy and numeracy as quickly as possible, in order for them to access the whole curriculum. It is intended that this will enable them to gain sufficient qualifications to access sixth-form education. A particular emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils' confidence and valuing their individual achievements.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection 88 pupils were on roll, of whom 3 boys and 1 girl were in the EYFS. There were 4 pupils in Years 1 and 2, 22 in Years 3 to 6, and 58 in Years 7 to 11. The overall ability profile of the pupils is slightly below the national average, with a wide range of ability represented across the school. The majority of pupils come from families with a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds, who live within a 20-mile radius. Almost all are of white British origin and a small number of pupils are of minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language. A few pupils transfer at the ages of 11 and 13 to mainstream education. At the end of Year 11, all pupils continue their education at sixth-form colleges or schools.
- 1.4 The school has identified 76 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 74 receive specialist support. Fourteen pupils have statements of special educational needs.

- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school for Years 1 to 6 and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and Years 7 to 11, and its National Curriculum equivalence, are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery, Little Berries	Nursery
Reception, Little Berries	Reception

Senior School

School	NC name
College 1	Year 7
College 2	Year 8
College 3	Year 9
College 4	Year 10
College 5	Year 11

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' overall achievement and learning, including the EYFS, is excellent. The pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims to give them the confidence and skills to access the curriculum. Pupils have good levels of understanding, knowledge and skills in all subjects. As they move up through the school the quality of their work improves significantly. Results in public examinations are below the average in relation to pupils of similar ability. However, in view of the pupils' significant difficulties, and their varied starting points, they achieve extremely well. They overcome their difficulties to achieve sufficient qualifications to gain places at sixth-form colleges and schools. Children in the EYFS make excellent progress overall relative to their starting points and capabilities. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress. In Years 7 to 11, the pupils' progress becomes rapid as their confidence increases. Pupils with SEND and those with statements of special educational needs progress well.
- 2.2 The pupils' achievements are strongly supported by the excellent quality of the teaching and curriculum. Great care is taken to ensure that the curriculum is carefully matched to the pupils' varied needs. Teachers use a successful, multi-sensory approach to teaching. On the few occasions that teaching did not take sufficient account of pupils' individual needs, they lost concentration and their learning was restricted. The systems to support pupils with SEND across the school are outstanding. The pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities. The pupils' attitude to their work and learning is usually extremely positive.
- 2.3 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent. They enjoy being part of the close-knit community in which their strengths are recognised and valued. Pupils benefit from the school's excellent pastoral care, and the efficient systems in place for welfare, health and safety, including thorough safeguarding procedures.
- 2.4 The quality of governance is excellent. Governors have a clear understanding of the specialised education that the school provides. Although the governors have ensured that the EYFS follows the correct curriculum, their links with the setting are not yet fully developed. The quality of leadership and management overall is excellent. Knowledgeable leadership has a clear vision for the educational direction of the school. Senior managers work well together, although inconsistencies exist in the number of responsibilities undertaken by individuals, and there is a lack of clarity about oversight of the EYFS and Years 1 and 2. The leadership and management of the EYFS are good. Since the previous inspection, management has monitored teaching and learning through regular visits to lessons across the school. A more rigorous appraisal system has been developed and is in the early stages of implementation. Links with parents are excellent. The school knows its families extremely well and takes great care in supporting them.

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) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Implement the recently created formal appraisal system to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of teaching by management.
2. Adjust and clarify the balance and extent of senior managers' responsibilities to ensure that they can carry out their roles as effectively as possible across the school.
3. Strengthen the governors' links with the EYFS setting.

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' overall achievement and learning, including the EYFS, is excellent.
- 3.2 The pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims to give them the confidence and skills to access the curriculum. In the EYFS, children demonstrate good skills in numeracy for their age. They recognise and sequence numbers up to six and count confidently in outdoor games. Children are beginning to identify the initial letters of objects when looking at pictures, and starting to form letters prior to writing.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils have good levels of understanding, knowledge and skills in all subjects. As they move up the school the quality of their work improves significantly. They become increasingly articulate, confident to explain their work, and they listen more carefully. The content of the pupils' writing is imaginative, and often of a high standard. In view of their difficulties, pupils' reading skills are sound. The pupils increasingly think independently, making choices which demonstrate their logical thought. Year 11 pupils preparing for external examinations demonstrated their ability to plan, cost and present their design projects. All pupils make excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for learning. Their physical and creative skills are well developed, and they are extremely competent in investigative work, and apply their mathematical skills efficiently.
- 3.4 Pupils are successful in team and individual activities. These include winning art prizes in a local festival and recognition in a national poetry competition. Pupils play hockey at county level. Twelve pupils have gained The Duke of Edinburgh's Award at bronze level. All pupils overcome their difficulties to achieve sufficient qualifications to gain places at sixth-form colleges and schools. On occasions, pupils have gained academic and sports scholarships to local independent schools.
- 3.5 Results at GCSE in 2011, the only examinations for which comparative data is currently available, have been below the average for pupils in maintained schools. However, the school's small number of entries makes statistical comparisons less meaningful. The results for 2012 show improvement. The number of pupils achieving grades A* to C has increased, and 10 per cent of pupils have achieved A* or A grades. In view of the pupils' significant difficulties, and their varied starting points, these results demonstrate that the pupils achieve extremely well at GCSE.
- 3.6 Early Years Foundation Stage children make excellent progress overall relative to their starting points and capabilities. Judged from lesson observation, interviews and work scrutinised, and in view of the pupils' significant learning difficulties, their progress in Years 1 to 6 is good overall. In Years 7 to 11, pupils' progress becomes rapid as their confidence increases, and they overcome their particular difficulties to gain success in GCSE examinations. All pupils with SEND and those with statements of special educational needs make good progress.
- 3.7 The pupils' attitude to their work and learning is usually extremely positive. Children in the EYFS are confident to share their knowledge. They are creative, and demonstrated their ability to think critically when working on a mirror frame using tools. In the outdoor learning environment, they were actively involved in searching for tinder thinner than their fingers for the fire. From Year 1, pupils enjoy their

lessons and almost always settle to work immediately, except when they are tired towards the end of the day, or the task set is not appropriate to their needs. Most pupils approach their learning with determination and perseverance. They rarely give up and are confident to ask for help to complete their tasks and activities. They can research, work independently and are willing to co-operate with one another in different groups.

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

- 3.8 The quality of the curriculum is excellent overall.
- 3.9 The course of study is extremely well matched to the pupils' varied needs and abilities, and strongly underpins the school's aims to provide a curriculum that prepares confident pupils for the next stage of their education. In the EYFS, the setting makes good provision, with excellent aspects, to meet the needs of the range of children who attend. The educational programmes are well covered through cross-curricular topics, and children greatly benefit from specialised teaching in design technology, music and sport. Although children's individual interests are catered for through the wide range of opportunities for them to initiate both indoors and out, on a few occasions the follow-up activities from which to choose were not sufficiently linked to the session's aim.
- 3.10 From Year 1, the curriculum is specifically designed around the learning requirements of dyslexic pupils and carefully planned to suit their individual needs. An appropriate emphasis is placed on English, mathematics and ICT, which enables them to build vital literacy and numeracy skills. The pupils' experiences are enhanced by food technology, drama and music lessons. Regular touch-typing lessons, and the consequent skills that the pupils acquire, create opportunities for them to use ICT confidently and to produce well-presented work. The personal, health and social education programme has a suitable focus on electronic communication safety. Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided by the physical education programme. The introduction of a virtual learning environment and the use of online learning resources give pupils useful additional learning opportunities that they can access from home. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 respond very positively to classroom opportunities to learn the clarinet and violin. As recommended at the previous inspection, pupils' learning is now underpinned by a focus on thinking skills which stimulates them intellectually, and enables them to take responsibility for their own studies.
- 3.11 Throughout the school, flexibility is built into the timetable to allow pupils to be taught at a level and pace that maximise their chances of success. In Years 1 to 6, pupils benefit from mixed-age classes which ensure that challenge matches their level of ability. In Years 10 and 11, the timetable is built around the pupils' GCSE choices, made from a suitably wide range. The pupils receive well-informed advice about their career and further education opportunities. They are supported by personal discussion with both staff and outside consultants who deliver mock interviews.
- 3.12 The curriculum is well supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities, both sporting and cultural. The pupils' education is enhanced by curriculum-linked visits such as geography field trips to a local reservoir. The service aspect of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and the performance by GCSE pupils of a short play at a local school give pupils opportunities to contribute to the local community. Regular sporting fixtures against other schools are greatly valued by the pupils.

3.13 The systems to support pupils with SEND across the school are outstanding. The whole focus of the school is to support the needs of the individual. Almost all staff have qualifications in dyslexia support. Many pupils arrive at the school with detailed assessments and statements from outside agencies. However, if further information is required, the school undertakes additional assessments to ensure that pupils receive appropriate, targeted support using individual education plans tailored to their needs. Assistance is usually provided within the classroom setting, with the highly skilled support of specialist dyslexia teaching assistants. Occasionally, when judged appropriate, pupils receive additional help in individual lessons, but the school considers that it is of greater benefit for pupils to remain with their peers whenever possible. If necessary, pupils receive help from speech and language therapists, and from occupational therapists. Close contact is always maintained with parents. Appropriate annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational needs take place.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.14 The quality of teaching overall is excellent.

3.15 In a significant number of lessons observed across the school, teaching was excellent, strongly supporting the school's aims and the pupils' achievement and progress. In the EYFS, teachers plan children's future learning carefully, based on accurate assessment. They implement effective strategies, using high quality resources efficiently, to meet the children's needs, balancing sensitively the need to support them, while providing opportunities to develop their independence.

3.16 From Year 1, teachers use an extremely successful, multi-sensory approach to teaching, which nearly always involves a wide range of highly evolved teaching strategies. Teaching matches the provision set out in pupils' statements of special educational needs. Lessons are well planned to match the different levels of ability and learning styles of the pupils. Teachers are aware of the need to revisit previously taught material and they provide a variety of ways in which pupils can consolidate their learning. On a few occasions, teachers did not vary their strategies sufficiently to match the pupils' needs, and the pupils lost concentration and their learning was restricted.

3.17 A strength of the teaching is the teachers' thorough knowledge and understanding of each pupil's needs, and their patience. They are always willing to support and re-explain. In supporting the progress of an individual pupil, they are unwavering in their determination and gentle persistence to help pupils learn. They make skilled judgements, based on experience and thorough training, as to the necessary balance between supporting pupils and their need to learn independence. Teachers motivate pupils by making lessons stimulating and fun. In interviews, pupils of all ages frequently commented on how much they enjoy their lessons, and they felt totally confident that they could ask for help and would receive it. Teachers are skilled in their use of ICT, not only as a tool to enable pupils to produce polished work, but also as a visual and organisational aid. A Year 10 geography lesson observed was almost entirely based on visual displays, which enabled pupils to grasp the concepts of the topic.

3.18 Teachers managed time successfully during lessons observed, aware of the limits of concentration of their pupils. However, teachers' time keeping and their punctuality towards the end of lessons were weak, which caused difficulties for the management

of time in subsequent lessons. Teachers make imaginative use of the indoor and outdoor spaces available.

- 3.19 In the pre-inspection questionnaires, concern was expressed by a few pupils and parents about the lack of challenge in the homework set. The inspection judgement is that the homework consolidates pupils' learning, and the scrutiny of written work demonstrated that homework written tasks prompted good and imaginative responses from pupils. The school policy of setting only small amounts and relatively simple homework is justified by the long and intense school day, and the specific need for pupils with dyslexia to rest and recuperate.
- 3.20 Teachers' marking is generally thorough, and in most instances contained directions from the teacher about how work could be improved. Verbal feedback, much valued by the pupils, ensures that pupils know how they are progressing. The school's assessment system works well. It is used effectively to measure each pupil's progress and attainment, and to assist teachers in planning lessons. The school has appropriate plans to extend the use of the information from assessment to identify more clearly how much progress pupils make as they move through the school.

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' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 This strongly reflects the school's emphasis on supporting the many pupils whose self-esteem is low, encouraging their self-confidence and valuing their strengths. Their self-esteem is raised extremely effectively as they progress up the school, so that by Year 11, pupils are able to talk maturely about their future career paths and prospects. All pupils learn to consider the needs of others in their behaviour and conduct. They show an awareness of non-material aspects of life in their appreciation of art and music, and in a weekly assembly that gives them a Thought for the Day. They share success at the celebration assembly, and endorse their own achievements and those of others in Good to be Me sessions.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral awareness is strong. From the EYFS, pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and respond positively to clear and direct guidance from teachers. They have a good understanding of how to conduct themselves to remain safe online and as they go about their lives. Pupils accept that they must take responsibility for their actions and the choices they make. They conduct themselves with courtesy and politeness around the school and generally behave well.
- 4.4 Pupils become socially adept through many activities, including open forum discussions and Circle Time. They are encouraged to contribute to school life by attending the monthly meetings of the school council. They are made aware of the world beyond home and school through assemblies on current affairs and fund raising for charities. Across the school, pupils have responsibilities within their classes. Senior pupils gain a sense of responsibility and self-worth as they are given opportunities to help younger pupils in sport. Pupils learn to become tolerant towards those within the school community who have varied needs. In the EYFS, children build respectful relationships with their peers and their teachers, and feel safe. They greatly benefit from their inclusion in whole-school activities and their regular work and play with pupils in Years 1 and 2. This develops their self-esteem so that they are confident when they transfer to the next stage of their education.
- 4.5 Pupils develop good cultural awareness. In the EYFS, children learn about different cultures from visitors who share their own traditions. Whilst pupils at the school are not drawn from culturally diverse backgrounds, they learn about major world religions, taught on a regular basis and carefully linked to the general knowledge programme. Pupils gain an understanding of their own culture through dance, music and drama, and visits to the theatre and local monuments.

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

- 4.6 The quality of the pastoral care of pupils is excellent.
- 4.7 The staff provide excellent support for all pupils, fulfilling the school's aims to enable them to succeed and gain confidence in a nurturing environment. In the EYFS, the key people responsible for individuals know their children extremely well. They provide sensitive support, stepping in when necessary, yet giving them sufficient opportunities to develop excellent personal independence. From Year 1, the main focus of care is provided by tutors who maintain a careful overview of each pupil's progress, strongly supported by senior management. However, all staff, including specialist subject teachers, have a detailed understanding of each pupil's needs and the best way in which to support them. Thorough pastoral records, easily accessible to staff, are maintained and updated frequently so that any difficulties or concerns can be addressed immediately. The pupils also benefit from access to an external counsellor. Strong relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils, underpin the sense of a family community.
- 4.8 The pupils are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles through aspects of the curriculum, and the opportunities provided for activity in sport and extra-curricular pursuits. In the EYFS, children take plenty of exercise and enjoy choosing their own snack from a variety of fruit. The nutritious lunches are appreciated by the pupils.
- 4.9 The school has effective systems to promote good behaviour, and prevent bullying. Staff maintain a consistent approach to encouraging pupils to behave well, which they usually do. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a few parents felt that incidents of bullying are not dealt with appropriately. In interviews, pupils stated that they could seek help from a variety of staff. If bullying did occur, which was rare, they knew that it would be dealt with appropriately. Records relating to such incidents demonstrate that the school deals with them effectively. In questionnaires, a few pupils felt that the sanctions system is not always applied fairly. After consideration of the evidence, from the school's disciplinary records, and observation during the inspection, the inspection judgement is that the system is fair. The sanctions applied are appropriate to the varied individual needs of the pupils.
- 4.10 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND. Pupil questionnaires and the school council are helpful in enabling pupils to express their views. When possible and appropriate, their suggestions are put into place.

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

- 4.11 The school's arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.12 These ensure that the pupils feel well cared for in the friendly, family environment where individuals and their needs are clearly understood. The policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils of all ages, including the EYFS, are appropriate and work extremely well. All staff are thoroughly trained in child protection at appropriate intervals and have an excellent awareness of the responsibilities they have for the care they give to pupils. A designated governor maintains specific oversight for pupils' safeguarding. The welfare, health and safety of children in the EYFS are a key priority for the school.
- 4.13 Efficient measures are in place across the school to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Fire prevention systems work efficiently and are carefully reviewed. Regular fire practices take place and staff have the necessary training. Risk

assessments for all aspects of the school, including the EYFS, are in place and regularly reviewed. Children learn about risk from an early age, as was observed when they showed an understanding of the dangers of fire during an outdoor learning session, and recognised a need to wash their hands after playing outdoors. A health and safety committee meets termly, and any concerns raised by staff are considered and action taken. Sick or injured pupils are looked after appropriately.

- 4.14 The admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored for the previous three years. Thorough systems ensure that pupils' absence or lateness are followed up carefully.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Efficient governance has ensured that the school is highly successful in achieving its aims. Governors, many of whom have been involved with the school as parents, provide effective oversight of almost all aspects of its work. They have a clear understanding of the vision for the specialised education that the school provides. Although the governors have ensured that the EYFS follows the correct curriculum, their links with the setting are not yet fully developed. A strong committee structure, working closely with management, underpins the work of the governing board. Its members have a wide range of appropriate skills to support the school, and individual governors have designated responsibilities for child protection and health and safety. Careful development planning and prudent financial management have enabled the school to make appropriate investment in resources, staff, accommodation and new developments. Governors have embarked upon an extensive programme of refurbishment across the school to enhance the quality of education provided for the pupils.
- 5.3 New governors are carefully introduced to their role. Knowledgeable leadership of the board has ensured that governors have a good insight into the school's strengths and areas for development. They receive detailed reports from management, and provide sufficient challenge and support to them to act as a stimulus for the school's continued development. They visit the school for formal and informal events.
- 5.4 The governors discharge their legal responsibilities for child protection, and welfare, health and safety appropriately. They have reviewed the policy for safeguarding and receive regular reports from management on the effectiveness of the procedures. The welfare of pupils is given a high priority.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent overall.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are extremely effective in ensuring that the school achieves its aims. They provide an environment in which pupils, the majority of whom are dyslexic, gain confidence and skills, ready for the next stage of their education. All policies reflect the school's ethos, and they are efficiently implemented for the benefit of the pupils from EYFS onwards. The safeguarding and welfare of pupils are at the core of all that management undertakes.
- 5.7 Knowledgeable leadership has a clear vision for the educational direction of the school, and a determination to give the pupils the best professional support possible to enable them to succeed. This vision is part of the fabric of the school, strongly supported by senior managers and all members of the community who work together in the pupils' best interests.
- 5.8 Senior managers work well together, although there are inconsistencies in the number of responsibilities undertaken by individuals, and a lack of clarity about

oversight of the EYFS and Years 1 and 2. The leadership and management of the EYFS are good. A few senior managers have commitment to a significant number of activities, so that although they work hard and are highly dedicated, they are not always able to be fully effective in all their roles. With the increasing numbers of pupils in the EYFS and Year 1 and 2, the management oversight of this part of the school is not clearly identified, although the needs of the pupils are carefully considered through frequent informal links between management and staff.

- 5.9 Self-evaluation in the EYFS works efficiently and a clear plan has been developed for improvement. This is closely linked to the setting's training programme which has enabled new initiatives, such as the woodland outdoor learning area, to be developed. Limited formal opportunities exist for the setting to monitor practice and appraise staff. Policies and procedures to promote equality and eliminate discrimination are highly effective in the EYFS.
- 5.10 The clear whole-school development plan demonstrates that management has an appropriate awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development, and is considering realistic ways to improve. New staff feel well supported and receive appropriate training. Great care is taken to recruit high quality staff, and all necessary recruitment checks are in place, recorded appropriately on the central register. Excellent professional development opportunities are provided for staff, although these are not currently linked to appraisal. Since the previous inspection, management has undertaken the monitoring of teaching and learning through regular visits to lessons across the school. A more rigorous appraisal system has been developed and is in the early stages of implementation. All staff are suitably trained in their roles to ensure that the needs of pupils are carefully met, that their welfare, health and safety are a priority, and that they are suitably safeguarded.
- 5.11 Links with parents are excellent. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed their satisfaction with most aspects of the support given to their children and the education they receive. Parents of those in the EYFS were extremely happy with their children's experiences in school. They value the daily contact with staff and information they receive through the home-school link book. A few parents of pupils from Year 1 upwards felt that they receive insufficient information about their children's progress, that standards of behaviour are not sufficiently high, that extra-curricular activities are limited and that the school is not well led and managed. The inspection judgement is that parents receive regular, clear details about their children's progress. The pupils generally behave well, and the extra-curricular programme is good in view of the size and location of the school. Leadership and management of the school are excellent.
- 5.12 Excellent relationships are fostered with parents, from the EYFS onwards. The school knows its families extremely well and takes great care in supporting parents and pupils in every aspect throughout their time at the school. Working in partnership with parents, the school secures appropriate support from external agencies when necessary. The school's 'open door' policy, observed during the inspection, provides parents with daily opportunities to talk with senior management and other staff who are easily accessible. Clear procedures for handling complaints are in place and any parental concerns are dealt with promptly and sensitively.
- 5.13 Parents have opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They benefit from being able to access the virtual learning environment, where they can see what their children are learning and look at samples of work. Parents are encouraged to support their children's reading at home, and assist them

with their studies at school where appropriate. This was observed with a design technology project, where parents have offered to support pupils in creating a quiet garden area for the school. The active parents' association, The Court Circle, organises a wide range of enjoyable activities for both pupils and parents. For example, following sports day, members organise a Fun Day afternoon and overnight camping. Families and staff also have opportunities to attend the annual ski trip. Such events strengthen the family atmosphere of the school.

- 5.14 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school. A wide range of communication, including newsletters, email and text messages, is used to ensure that parents are kept up to date with school news and events. The school's website and comprehensive 'joining pack' provide the parents of prospective pupils with valuable information. Great care is taken to ensure that new families are supported throughout the first few weeks at the school, with frequent contact to aid the transition.
- 5.15 Parents receive generally informative reports about their children's progress. Appropriate arrangements are in place for parents to meet formally and informally with staff to discuss this.

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