



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**LAMMAS SCHOOL**

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## Lammas School

Full Name of School	<b>Lammas School</b>
DfE Number	<b>891/6016</b>
Address	<b>Lammas School Lammas Road Sutton-in-Ashfield Nottinghamshire NG17 2AD</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01623 516879</b>
Email Address	<b>information@lammas-school.co.uk</b>
Headteacher	<b>Mrs Pamela Sessions</b>
Proprietor	<b>Ms Jane Reynolds</b>
Age Range	<b>5 to 19</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>66</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (35 boys; 31 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	5-11: <b>37</b> 11-19: <b>29</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>11 Feb 2014 to 14 Feb 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. This is the first ISI inspection since accreditation to an association.

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](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.

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 and the chair of the governing advisory group, 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**

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Mr Richard Hyde

Mrs Joanne Stone-Williams

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)

Team Inspector

(Former Assistant Head, ISA school)

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Lammas School is located in Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. It is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from five to nineteen. The sole proprietor is advised by three non-executive directors with regard to financial management. A governing advisory group, formed in September 2013, advises with regard to educational standards. This group includes members of the educational and business community and of the parent teacher association. Since the previous inspection, a new leadership team has been appointed. The headteacher has been in post since September 2013.
- 1.2 The original school, named St Mary's School, was built in 1700. The present building is adjacent to a church and was built by the National Society in 1846. In 1981, St Mary's School relocated, and the building was opened as an independent school. In 2010, Lammas School was purchased by the current proprietor, and was extensively refurbished prior to its opening.
- 1.3 The school aims to provide a broad, balanced curriculum with equal access for all pupils. It seeks to meet the pupils' needs so that they are personally fulfilled and able to develop the skills and knowledge to play a worthwhile role in society. It sets out to promote education as a whole-life process, underpinned by high moral and cultural values and standards.
- 1.4 There are currently 66 pupils attending the school, of whom 35 are boys and 31 are girls. The Primary Department consists of pupils from Years 1 to 6, and the Senior Department educates pupils from Years 7 to 13. Two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and four pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Pupils mainly come from Nottingham, Sutton, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Alfreton and a wide range of surrounding villages. Most pupils are of white British origin, with others representing the range of ethnicities in the local area.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school is in line with the national average, with a few pupils above and below the average, although the size of the school means that the profile of different cohorts varies. Pupils in the sixth form are expected to have attained five GCSEs at grades A\* to C, in appropriate subjects, including English and mathematics.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good. Pupils of all ages and abilities are successfully and happily educated. The curriculum is sound. Limited provision in music and drama, particularly in the Senior Department, restricts opportunities for pupils' creative development. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities in the Primary Department. Extra-curricular activities in the Senior Department are limited by its size, but meet the needs of most pupils. Teaching is good and contributes effectively to the development of the pupils' good levels of knowledge and skills. Pupils are prepared well for external examinations. Marking is inconsistent, and assessment of the pupils' potential, tracking and monitoring of progress, and target-setting throughout the school are in the very early stages of development. This makes it difficult to accurately assess the starting point, progress and attainment of pupils. Most teaching enables pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, to make good progress, but work is not always matched to the ability of pupils, particularly the most able.
- 2.2 Pupils have good standards of personal development by the time they leave the school. They have a well-developed sense of moral and social responsibility, and their spiritual and cultural awareness is enhanced through art, literature and elements of cross-curricular work. All staff have a strong role in the good pastoral care of the pupils. Within an encouraging ethos, pupils develop into courteous, confident, articulate and caring young people. The recently introduced house system provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding and safer recruitment, are sound. Oversight of welfare, health and safety had been insufficiently rigorous. A welfare, health and safety committee has recently been established.
- 2.3 A sound governance structure has been established, including the recently constituted governing advisory group. The board is aware that the expertise of advisory governors is limited in scope, and is actively seeking to recruit new members. The aims of the school have not been recently reviewed and do not fully reflect the vision of the new school. The recently devised school development plan identifies clear priorities, actions and timescales, but is still in its early stages. A thorough process of self-evaluation, with systems for monitoring and performance management, is yet to be implemented. Monitoring by those responsible for governance has not been sufficiently rigorous and limited training has been undertaken in this area. Procedures are now in place for oversight and monitoring of the review, update and implementation of the required policies. A new leadership team has been appointed since the previous inspection. However, leadership and management roles and responsibilities lack clarity, particularly with regard to subject co-ordination, and time to fulfil these is limited. A programme of professional development linked to school priorities and individual targets is in its early stages. The recommendations following the previous Ofsted inspection have been implemented, and there is a strong commitment to seeking to provide the highest possible standards in all aspects of the school's provision.

**2.(b) Action points****(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

**(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Increase training for those responsible for governance to enable effective oversight of school operations and implementation of regulatory requirements.
2. Provide time for senior leaders to fully meet their responsibilities, including the performance management of staff, and ensure suitable, relevant training.
3. Instigate effective self-evaluation, including a review of the school's aims.
4. Ensure rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by middle management and a coherent approach to assessment, tracking, target setting, marking and reporting.
5. Ensure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils, particularly the most able.



### **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 good.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils are well educated in accordance with its aim for them to develop the skills and knowledge to enable them to play a worthwhile role in society. Standards of achievement have improved since the previous Ofsted inspection. Pupils acquire good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in their academic work. Throughout, pupils demonstrate courtesy, attentive listening skills and respect for one another's views. They are articulate, confidently engaging in mature conversations across all subject areas and in social situations. They develop good skills in reading and writing for a range of purposes and audiences.
- 3.3 The pupils' mathematical and logical skills are good. In the primary department they develop confidence with calculation, enthusiastically applying their skills when problem solving. In science and across the curriculum, Senior Department pupils are able to use a range of mathematical procedures to investigate, analyse and hypothesise. Where they are sufficiently challenged, the pupils' independent thinking is extended well, but this is not consistent throughout all year groups and subject areas. By the time they reach the Senior Department, most pupils have competent skills in information and communication technology (ICT), and are able to use these creatively for research and analysis and to present their work. Pupils demonstrate good scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. They confidently use scientific language to theorise and predict. They are able to enhance their understanding of scientific concepts creatively by combining other subjects with science. For example, they use video to produce scientific news items and art to illustrate scientific concepts effectively. Most pupils achieve well in challenging tasks set in physical education (PE) and sport.
- 3.4 Pupils eagerly participate in a range of extra-curricular activities, including the senior science and digital media club, art and crafts club, football club and gaming club. School productions and junior choir provide some opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their musical and dramatic abilities. Overall, the pupils' achievements are restricted in these areas as a result of limited opportunities within the curriculum. Artwork on display around the school shows a high level of creativity. Pupils won prizes in a recent art competition for independent schools. Recent entry into sporting events for independent schools and the use of local leisure facilities have enabled pupils with sporting ability to achieve good levels of success.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment in the Primary Department cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national norm but on the evidence available, including lesson observation, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their work, it is judged to be similar to national age-related expectations. Pupils enter Year 1 from a variety of schools and settings, and the progress and attainment of some are limited by lack of opportunities for practical activities and group work. Good overall progress is made by the time pupils reach the end of Year 4.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been in line with the national average for maintained schools, and results in International GCSE ICT in 2012 were higher than worldwide norms, although the small size of the cohorts makes statistical comparisons difficult. The

pupils' work indicates that they make good progress in order to attain these results. For the first time, a small number of pupils were entered for A-level examinations in 2013 and individual pupils successfully achieved the necessary grades to gain entry to their first-choice universities and colleges.

- 3.7 Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make good progress. Their progress and achievement are greatly enhanced by the individual attention that they receive in small classes. The progress of the most able varies as opportunities for challenge and extension are limited in some teaching.
- 3.8 Younger Primary Department pupils are extremely enthusiastic about their work and are eager to participate. All pupils are polite, caring, diligent and exceptionally well behaved. They achieve well in lessons where they have clear learning outcomes and know the steps required to achieve personal targets. Sixth-form pupils are able to evaluate their attainment against examination criteria effectively, and to plan with teachers what they need to do in order to attain their target grades.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is sound.
- 3.10 Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a sixth form and is developing its curriculum. Overall, the curriculum, schemes of work and planning cover the required areas of learning, and meet the needs of the pupils at their different stages.
- 3.11 The Primary Department curriculum includes the National Curriculum subjects. Some music is incorporated across the curriculum, and ICT is taught as a discrete subject, although opportunities to use it across the curriculum are limited. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught most subjects, including literacy and numeracy, by subject specialists in the Senior Department building. This provision enables access to specialist facilities, strongly supporting continuity of the curriculum and transition to the Senior Department.
- 3.12 In the Senior Department, pupils study a range of subjects but the curriculum lacks the breadth and balance envisaged in the school's aims. In Years 7 to 9, the core subjects are taught alongside the humanities, French, ICT, art, citizenship, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and careers. In Year 10 options are expanded to include psychology, philosophy and ethics, as well as BTEC Sport. The absence of music and drama as discrete subjects limits the pupils' creative development. In the sixth form pupils are able to choose A-level courses from a similar range to that offered to younger pupils, and most follow tailor-made programmes.
- 3.13 Personal, social and health education provision is limited in both the Primary and the Senior Department. The PSHE programme is taught for one period per week in Years 7, 8 and 9, and assemblies are occasionally used to re-enforce themes such as the prevention of bullying.
- 3.14 The provision for pupils with SEND is good. Individual education plans (IEPs) have clear targets, teaching strategies and success criteria, and are regularly reviewed and monitored. In addition, a co-ordinator is responsible for the implementation of individual learning programmes (ILPs) for any pupils who require support in the event of short-term personal difficulties. Although implementation of ILPs is not currently monitored, staff discuss the needs of these pupils informally. Planning in the Primary Department does not always sufficiently reflect IEPs and ILPs in order to

effectively meet the individual needs of pupils. Some extension work is provided in the Senior Department for the more able, however this is not consistent across all departments.

- 3.15 Extra-curricular activities provided for primary pupils are of a good quality. They are reviewed on a half-termly basis and include the choir, cross-country, and homework and gardening clubs. There are also frequent drama performances for parents, for example the recent production of *A Christmas Carol*. Extra-curricular provision in the Senior Department is limited by the size of the school, but meets the needs of most pupils. There is a thriving games club, an English club, a science club and a variety of sporting activities. However, there is a lack of any provision for regular drama or musical activity.
- 3.16 Educational visits and school field trips are used to enhance the curriculum. A strong link with a school in Romania includes pupils corresponding in French.
- 3.17 Pupils receive helpful careers advice. Sixth-form pupils are very well assisted with their university applications and with other career paths, such as vocational training and apprenticeships. Work experience is provided as part of the sixth-form curriculum, with placements being arranged in accordance with the pupils' interests.

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

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.19 Since the previous inspection, the school has focused on raising the quality of teaching and learning throughout. Good teaching contributes towards the good levels of the pupils' achievement and personal development. The school successfully achieves its related aims.
- 3.20 Teachers have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and are committed to helping each pupil to succeed. Displays throughout the school celebrate a range of work produced by the pupils that is of a high standard. Planning is diligent, ensuring effective coverage of the curriculum. However, it does not always take into account information drawn from assessment, and the individual needs and abilities of the pupils. This is particularly evident in some primary mixed-age classes, where planning and teaching focus more on the age of the pupils than their ability.
- 3.21 Subject teaching in Years 5 and 6 enables teachers to provide more challenge, and to effectively prepare pupils for the Senior Department. Transition planning for Year 4 has been established in order to ensure that pupils are prepared for the change to subject teaching.
- 3.22 Throughout the school, staff work hard to build strong relationships with pupils and their families. During pupil interviews, and in responses to questionnaires, both pupils and parents expressed their appreciation for the way staff support individual learning. The wide use of praise and encouragement motivates pupils, and contributes strongly towards their progress and good levels of achievement. The school has a suitable range of facilities and resources. Recent upgrades to the ICT suite enable improved access to ICT, although its use is still inconsistent across all age groups and the wider curriculum.
- 3.23 In the most effective teaching, teachers share clear learning intentions and have high expectations. Pupils are clear about their targets and can manage their

learning independently. Time and resources are well managed, with a range of creative and stimulating opportunities to foster interest, including pair work and group work. In GCSE science, pupils confidently investigated metallic structures and bonding; following individual investigation, they worked efficiently as a team to create a video illustrating these scientific processes and demonstrated a high level of understanding. Younger Primary Department pupils worked co-operatively in pairs and in groups to analyse a poem, enabling them to understand rhyme, rhythm and syllables, and recited the poem together with high levels of expression and understanding.

- 3.24 Where teaching is less effective, planning does not incorporate teachers' knowledge of the pupils' needs. Introduction to lessons is overlong, which limits opportunities for creativity, investigation, or paired or group work. An overdependence on worksheets restricts challenge and opportunities for individual response.
- 3.25 Assessment of the pupils' potential, and tracking of their progress, target setting and monitoring are in the very early stages of development. Staff informally discuss the progress and attainment of pupils and make individual assessments, using age-related expectations and external examination grades to form internal benchmarks. The lack of formal monitoring and use of external, standardised benchmarks makes it difficult for staff to assess the starting points of pupils, predict outcomes, set targets and accurately measure progress and attainment. Preparation for external examinations is good, and pupils are mostly clear with regard to their targets in these and what is required to achieve them.
- 3.26 During interviews and in response to the parent and pupil questionnaires, high levels of satisfaction were expressed with regard to the way that staff encourage and support individuals. The IEPs of pupils with EAL and those with SEND, including any with a statement of special educational needs, effectively indicate how to support their learning. Provision for those with a statement of special educational needs is suitable and implemented effectively. However, work is not always matched to the ability of pupils, particularly the most able.
- 3.27 The school does not have a clear, consistent policy with regard to presentation and marking. Work is regularly marked with many positive and encouraging comments. However, the setting of clear targets, marking against learning objectives shared with pupils, peer review and giving the pupils opportunities to respond to feedback are limited to a small number of individual subjects.

## **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 good.
- 4.2 The spiritual development of pupils is good. They show an appreciation of non-material aspects of life, and an awareness of and respect for their own and others' faiths and cultures, fostered by visits to places of interest. The school is beginning to use assemblies to celebrate house and individual achievements. In a recent assembly, pupils enjoyed sharing their house community projects with the whole school. Pupils are courteous, confident and welcoming of visitors to the school, and they show emotional maturity.
- 4.3 A strong moral sense has recently been fostered through a house community project, which has enabled pupils to visit senior citizens in a care home, help in a charity shop and collect litter. Pupils of all ages shared their experiences with the rest of the school in an assembly and all expressed a strong desire to further develop the connections made. The ethos and moral code of the school enables pupils to have a clear understanding of right and wrong. In a study of *The Lord of the Flies* in English and the civil rights movement in history, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of moral concepts and complexities of human behaviour. They also discuss topics such as euthanasia and children's rights maturely in citizenship.
- 4.4 The pupils' social and cultural development is good, and is particularly enhanced in art and literature. For example, through the study of novels by John Steinbeck and F Scott Fitzgerald and of aboriginal art, pupils develop empathy with people from different social, historical and cultural backgrounds. Pupils have an appreciation of diversity and difference, and many strongly expressed the belief engendered by the school that everyone is equal. Pupils have a clear sense of their own place in and responsibility towards the world and to others, particularly those less fortunate than themselves. Many have a developing political and economic awareness, demonstrated in a geography lesson on the contrast between responses to extreme weather in different countries. Senior pupils demonstrated strong leadership skills in the way they organised their house teams and presentations. In their replies to the pupil questionnaire several pupils expressed a desire to take on more responsibility. Inspectors judge that the school is now well placed to provide further opportunities for pupils in all year groups to contribute to the school and to develop their leadership skills.
- 4.5 Pupils have good standards of personal development by the time they leave the school. Sixth-form pupils expressed enthusiasm for the way they feel the school has enabled them to develop personally.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.7 Throughout the school, staff provide effective support and guidance for all pupils. This is in accordance with the school's aim of meeting pupils' needs so that they are personally fulfilled. All staff have a strong role in the pastoral care of the pupils, and an excellent relationship exists between them, based upon approachability and mutual respect. Staff know the pupils extremely well and support their personal development. Relationships amongst pupils themselves are equally as positive. The school has plans in place to develop further the role of the form tutor and tutor time, in order to enhance pupils' personal development.
- 4.8 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils stated that they feel the school does not ask for or respond to their opinions. The school is aware that it currently lacks a system for pupils to formally discuss issues with staff. The recently developed house system is beginning to be used as a forum for pupils to discuss matters that are important to them and to agree actions.
- 4.9 All pupils bring packed lunches from home. The hall is used as a dining area that promotes a positive atmosphere and opportunities for social interaction. Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and to take regular exercise. The timetabled programme of sports and PE is greatly enhanced by the opportunity to use the local sports centre for these activities.
- 4.10 The school is highly effective in promoting good behaviour. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small number of pupils felt that the giving of rewards and sanctions by staff is inconsistent. Inspectors found that staff are aware of inconsistencies, for example in the award of house points, and are considering ways of ensuring that the issue of awards and sanctions is consistent across the school. Good measures are in place to guard against bullying. In questionnaire responses a very small minority of pupils felt that the school does not deal well with cases of bullying. However, in a wide range of discussions with pupils themselves, they consistently said that they were not aware of any bullying at the school.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, and effectively supports these pupils and others identified as having additional needs.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.13 Since the previous Ofsted inspection, the school has taken effective steps to provide a safe environment. Thorough risk assessments are produced for activities across the whole school, for off-site visits and for particular subjects, including PE and science. Regular fire drills are conducted and recorded. External contractors maintain fire safety equipment and are now engaged to conduct risk assessments. A welfare, health and safety committee has been constituted, which comprises the chair of the advisory group, senior and maintenance staff, and an external contractor. This committee has responsibility for monitoring welfare, health and safety, and for advising the proprietor of any actions that need to be taken. Members of the committee take their responsibilities seriously, and sound measures are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils and to minimise the risk of fire and other hazards.

- 4.14 The first-aid, and welfare, health and safety policies now have regard to official guidance and have begun to be implemented effectively. Recruitment checks and the recording of these in the central register of appointments meet requirements. The school is developing close links with the local safeguarding children's board and child protection agencies. All staff receive child protection training, which is updated at the required level and frequency.
- 4.15 The pupils' attendance is monitored extremely carefully and the admission and attendance registers are completed and stored correctly.
- 4.16 The school takes due care of any pupils who are ill or injured, in a suitably equipped and conveniently located medical room. First aiders are well qualified and strategically placed in the PE, science, and the Primary and the Senior Department. Any accidents are reported promptly and are carefully recorded. Staff are extremely well informed with regard to the pupils' individual medical needs and conditions. Medical records are well maintained.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 The proprietor is highly committed to maintaining the school's family ethos, and to its aim to meet the needs of pupils so that they are personally fulfilled and able to play a worthwhile role in society. The proprietor visits on a weekly basis and ensures very good knowledge of the school.
- 5.3 A sound governance structure comprising non-executive directors and advisory governors has been established to support the governance and development of the school. Regular board meetings are held and senior staff provide informative reports. The aims of the school have not been recently reviewed and do not fully reflect the vision of the newly formed school.
- 5.4 The non-executive directors provide effective financial advice to the proprietor. Prudent financial control has enabled substantial refurbishment of the school, whilst ensuring that material and human resources are in place to meet the needs of pupils. Members of the newly formed governing advisory group provide valuable support to senior and other staff. Currently there is a limited range of expertise on the advisory group. The proprietor is aware of this and the school is actively seeking additional members, particularly with expertise in those areas where governance has legal obligations.
- 5.5 Limited training in the responsibilities of governance has been undertaken. Substantial amendments to the welfare, safeguarding and complaints policies were necessary during the inspection to ensure they follow national guidance. Oversight, particularly of welfare, health and safety, has been insufficiently rigorous, with overreliance on individual senior staff to conduct the necessary checks. Implementation of the policies and compliance with regulatory requirements are now monitored by the recently constituted welfare, health and safety committee. The proprietor, directors and advisory governors are now aware of the extent of their responsibilities and the need to both support and challenge the school.



## **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 sound.
- 5.7 Since the previous inspection a new leadership team has been appointed. Members of the team are highly committed to the success of the school and together with the proprietor and advisory governors are developing a clear vision and direction for the future. The headteacher currently has a class responsibility, which restricts the time available to carry out leadership responsibilities, including monitoring and performance management. Plans are in place to enable senior leaders to have a more flexible timetable in order to carry out their leadership duties.
- 5.8 Leadership and management roles and responsibilities are in the process of being agreed and developed. As a consequence, reporting lines and accountabilities are not always clear. A thorough process of self-evaluation, including of the school's aims, and systems for monitoring and performance management, has yet to be implemented. The chair of the advisory governance group has conducted the initial appraisal of the headteacher. A comprehensive programme of performance management and professional development linked to school priorities and individual targets is in its early stages. In particular, the role of subject co-ordinators is not consistently developed. This limits opportunities to establish a coherent system for planning to meet the pupils' needs, assessment, and monitoring of progress and target setting. The recently devised school development plan identifies clear priorities, actions and timescales, but is still in the early stages of implementation.
- 5.9 Highly committed staff contribute to creating a friendly community that responds effectively to the needs of all pupils. This is reflected in the pupils' positive attitude and behaviour and the good pastoral care.
- 5.10 Safer recruitment procedures are followed for all new staff appointments, and the centralised register for the appointment of staff, governors and volunteers is accurately maintained. Senior staff involved in the recruitment and appointment of staff have received initial training in safer recruitment and the school has plans to provide additional administrative support and training in this area.
- 5.11 Teaching and non-teaching staff are deployed effectively. Regular staff meetings and working meetings, together with ease of informal communication, ensure that staff are kept well informed with regard to school operations and the academic and personal development of the pupils.
- 5.12 Links between the school and parents are good, strongly supporting the aims of the school. The school communicates effectively with parents personally and through newsletters and its website. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents overwhelmingly stated that they feel welcome at the school and are happy with the information that they receive. They praise the school's family atmosphere and the way that all of the staff know their children very well. They are pleased with the progress made by their children, and strongly state that their children feel happy and safe at school.
- 5.13 Parents of current and prospective pupils are given access to all relevant information about the school. There are two parent consultations and one written report each year. Comments with regard to the pupils' personal development are detailed, and

demonstrate that teachers know their pupils very well. There is some inconsistency with regard to the provision of academic grades. Some parents of senior pupils expressed that they would appreciate access to individual teachers as opposed to solely the form tutor for all parent consultations.

- 5.14 Parents have suitable opportunities to be involved in the life and work of the school, such as accompanying school groups on educational visits. The parent teacher association is a key part of the school, providing social events for parents, staff and pupils. A series of fund-raising activities is organised throughout the year, including school discos, Christmas and summer fairs, and an Easter egg hunt. Funds raised are used to enhance the school, including an attractive garden area and graffiti art murals designed by the pupils and executed by a professional artist.
- 5.15 The school's complaints policy is now clear and appropriate. A small number of parents stated in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that their concerns had not been handled well. Records indicate that senior leaders diligently follow up any concerns. Parents' concerns are mainly referred to senior leadership, but plans are in place to develop the role of form tutors in order that they become the first point of contact.

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