



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

MICKLEFIELD SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Micklefield School

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| Full Name of School | Micklefield School |
| DfE Number | 936/6080 |
| Registered Charity Number | 312069 |
| Address | Micklefield School 10 Somers Road Reigate Surrey RH2 9DU |
| Telephone Number | 01737 224212 |
| Fax Number | 01737 248889 |
| Email Address | office@micklefieldschool.co.uk |
| Head | Mrs Lyn Rose |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Alex Hunter |
| Age Range | 3 to 11 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 301 |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (135 boys; 166 girls) |
| Numbers by Age | 3-5 (EYFS): 83 5-11: 218 |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: 301 |
| Number of Boarders | Total: 0 |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed |
| Inspection Dates | 13 May 2014 to 16 May 2014 |

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2009.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 and other governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. 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 Rod Sharman | Reporting Inspector |
| Mrs Loraine Guest | Team Inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Julie Jackson | Team Inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school) |
| Ms Tessa Richardson | Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years |

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Micklefield School was founded in 1910 and was located in a house in Reigate after which it was named. It moved to its current site in Reigate in 1925. The school operates as a limited company with charitable status and is administered by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection a building programme has seen the extension of the accommodation for Reception-aged children, new music rooms, an art suite, the reconfiguring of the library and the information and communication technology (ICT) room, and the construction of a trim trail.
- 1.2 The school seeks to provide an education for boys and girls that fosters the pursuit of high standards. It aims to encourage pupils to become successful learners and responsible and independent members of the school community. Although the Christian faith underpins the ethos of the school, children of all faiths are welcomed. The school seeks to forge a strong partnership with parents.
- 1.3 The school provides education for 301 pupils (135 boys and 166 girls) aged between 3 and 11. Eighty-three children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There are 218 pupils in Years 1 to 6. Most pupils are from the local area and come from professional and business families. The ability profile of the school, as indicated in the results of standardised tests taken by pupils, is above the national average within a fairly wide spread of abilities. No pupils have statements of special educational needs. Twenty-six pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SEND) and receive extra support. A significant minority of pupils come from ethnic backgrounds. Five pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and receive help in acquiring the language.
- 1.4 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| School | NC name |
| Preps | Nursery |
| Reception | Reception |

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is mostly excellent and pupils are very well educated in line with the school's aims. In the EYFS, the overall quality and standards of the provision, and children's outcomes, are good although gaps in leadership and management have only recently been addressed. In the remainder of the school, pupils' attainment is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. They make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils' attitudes to their work and learning are exemplary. The broad curriculum is excellent and complemented by the rich provision of extra-curricular activities. The quality of teaching is good and contributes significantly to pupils' achievement. Teaching is well-planned to capture pupils' interest and lessons usually move at a good pace. Where teaching is less effective, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to think for themselves. Marking is completed conscientiously and consistently. A comprehensive range of tests is used to assess and monitor the pupils' progress.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent, and is fostered by the school's positive and supportive ethos, reflecting the school's values. Relationships between pupils and teachers, and with their peers, are very strong. Pastoral care is excellent. Extremely good attention is paid to safeguarding pupils and to health and safety.
- 2.3 Governance is good. Governors take clear steps to ensure that the aims of the ethos of the school are being realised and the needs of children remain at the core of discussion and action. They undertake their oversight of child protection conscientiously. The safeguarding procedures are reviewed by them on an annual basis. The current arrangements for assessing safeguarding, though still meeting requirements, are not sufficiently formalised. Overall leadership and management are excellent leading to improved outcomes for children's education and welfare. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires were highly supportive. The school has successfully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection.

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. Ensure teaching provides regular opportunities for pupils to think for themselves.
2. Provide a clear structure and format for governors to report the outcomes of their review of safeguarding and the evidence underpinning their annual review.
3. Ensure that EYFS provision is routinely monitored using the EY checklist.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievements is excellent overall.
- 3.2 The excellent level of achievement, is the successful fulfilment of the school's aims to foster the pursuit of high standards and the encouragement to become successful learners. The quality of achievement has improved since the previous inspection, for example pupils are more competent in their use of ICT.
- 3.3 Children have sure foundations laid in the EYFS and they make good progress in relation to their starting points. In the Nursery, children speak with increasing clarity. They enjoy listening to stories and joining in. In Reception, they make excellent progress in learning to read and build and write words phonetically. They sort shapes correctly. They listen for a sustained period of time. Children manipulate small tools and pencils with dexterity and try hard to control their bodies during physical exercise. They are confident when engaged in new experiences, make independent choices, take up different challenges and enjoy new opportunities. Their creativity is shown when they sing with a specialist teacher.
- 3.4 In the rest of the school, pupils are successful in developing the knowledge, understanding and skills in their academic work and in their extra-curricular activities. They are highly articulate both in lessons and when involved in debate. They confidently express their opinions and effectively argue their point in discussions, for example whether it is morally right to extend human life. They read fluently and are keen to read for pleasure and research. They write in a wide range of styles; for example older pupils write compelling haiku poems based on the seasons. Younger pupils imaginatively write their own myths. Pupils' writing is well structured, paying due attention to spelling and grammar. High standards of presentation are achieved. Pupils research efficiently using the library and internet, as seen in their extended projects. They show high levels of competence in physical activity.
- 3.5 The pupils' creative skills are successfully developed in subjects across the curriculum, particularly in music and drama. Pupils demonstrate highly developed skills when singing and playing their musical instruments. In public speaking and drama they show considerable expertise. They competently apply their mathematical skills in other subjects when appropriate. The pupils' use of ICT is advanced, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils show a logical approach to their work across the curriculum, for example when they devise an experiment in science.
- 3.6 Achievement in extra-curricular activities is excellent. High standards of performance are reached in music. Pupils individually, and in choirs and ensembles, gain awards at local music festivals and further afield. They are successful in their instrumental music examinations. The school's drama productions are well received. Pupils' attainment in their London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) examinations is high. Achievement in physical pursuits is excellent as seen in the sports scholarships and awards to senior schools.
- 3.7 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests. On the evidence available, including scrutiny of pupils' completed work, discussions with them and their responses in lessons, it is judged to be

excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Their level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils who are particularly gifted or talented make good progress. Their progress is carefully monitored and planned for. If progress is not as rapid as it should be, appropriate steps are taken. Pupils with SEND make a high rate of progress as they are very well supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) who provides them with high quality specialist help, especially with reading. Pupils with EAL make good progress as teachers ensure they fully understand the tasks in lessons. In addition, extra support is provided by the SENCO in helping them to understand idioms and sayings in English. Pupils are highly successful in gaining places at the senior schools best suited to them with a broad range of scholarships and awards.

- 3.8 A highly significant factor in pupils' excellent achievement is their exemplary attitude to learning. They are keen to learn and succeed in their studies. Pupils settle to work quickly, make the best use of their time and work hard. They readily co-operate with each other. Where the teaching encourages them to think for themselves, they use their initiative successfully.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The curriculum effectively supports the school's aim to enable pupils to achieve well. It provides pupils with an all-round educational experience which covers the requisite subjects. Detailed planning in each subject ensures that the curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities.
- 3.11 In the EYFS, the setting makes good provision across the expected areas of learning to mostly meet the needs of the range of children who attend. Care is taken to ensure that a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity is offered. At times, there are planned opportunities to provide the curriculum outdoors. The appropriate use of specialist staff as well as planned educational visits enhance the children's learning experiences. In nursery, children make local educational visits. During the inspection a farm visit for the youngest children enabled the farm staff to encourage the children to think for themselves through their effective questioning.
- 3.12 Throughout the school, pupils are provided with a secure grounding in the core areas of English and mathematics, in line with the school's aim to prepare them for their entrance examinations to senior schools through academic rigour, but this does not inhibit their access to the broad curriculum available. French is taught from the nursery upwards. Pupils have good access to ICT which has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Personal, social, and health education (PSHE) plays an important part in the curriculum and reflects the school's aims and ethos. Pupils benefit from many educational visits, including residential visits to Sussex and France.
- 3.13 Effective use is made of ICT; teachers use the inter-active white boards in their classrooms to good effect as well as the computers in the ICT room. In turn, the pupils frequently use their computers at home for their homework and research.
- 3.14 High quality provision in creative subjects further enhances the opportunities available to pupils. Music forms an important aspect of the curriculum and pupils have the opportunity to learn a variety of instruments. Pupils are supported well by a team of visiting specialist instrumental teachers. Four choirs and various ensembles

are well established and meet on a regular basis to practise for events in school and the local community. Drama is effectively incorporated into the curriculum and pupils enjoy the experience of performing in front of an audience in a variety of productions. A recent art exhibition featuring willow sculptures made by pupils in Years 5 and 6 was successful with the exhibits being sold at auction for charity.

- 3.15 Effective systems are implemented to identify and support any pupil with SEND and those who have been identified as gifted and talented. Pupils with SEND have additional high quality support from either the SENCO or in-class support from teaching assistants under the direction of the class teacher. The school sets achievable targets for achievement and in individual education plans are appropriately developed and monitored. Pupils who are talented are provided with good opportunities for learning; for example talented musicians play in ensembles and in music competitions. More able pupils are provided with suitable tasks; for example in a mathematics lesson, where the complexity of the calculation provided for them was challenging. Pupils with EAL are well supported in lessons by their teachers which builds their confidence in spoken English.
- 3.16 The curriculum and pupils' educational experiences are enriched by an excellent breadth of extra-curricular activities, ranging from debating to chamber music, which enable pupils to develop their skills and talents and make a strong contribution to their personal development. Parents and pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires were highly appreciative of the wide range of activities available. The school is actively involved in the life of the community, supporting local charities such as Shelter and 'Henry's charity' which helps children with autism. In addition, the school is supporting the establishment of a school in Kenya.
- 3.17 The many attractive displays of pupils' work around the school accurately reflect a busy, lively environment. All these aspects successfully support the school's aim of nurturing each child so that their talents, whether academic, sporting, creative or musical, can be developed and valued.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.19 As reported at the previous inspection, the quality of teaching is mostly good and at times is excellent. Together with pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, teaching supports their high achievement in line with the school's aims.
- 3.20 In the EYFS, adults have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning and development of young children. The teaching is good with a number of effective strategies used to promote secure progress in children's learning. Regular and effective assessment of children ensures their achievement is monitored throughout the school from the early years onwards. In the EYFS, adults make focused and incidental observations on the children's progress and the characteristics of effective learning, such as exploring, investigating and thinking critically, that individuals display. Adults effectively motivate the children and use the good quality resources well.
- 3.21 Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged and supported to make the most of their intellectual, physical and creative talents. Teachers are enthusiastic and hold high expectations for their pupils' learning. Lessons take place in an atmosphere where pupils are encouraged to do their best. Pupils are well supported as teachers know their pupils' individually, taking account of their differing needs. Good use is

made of a wide range of teaching methods, together with a variety of activities which capture pupils' interest. In an imaginative science lesson where pupils investigated the properties of yeast, the enthusiasm of the teacher was contagious and led to pupils eagerly devising their own investigations and becoming absorbed in their work. Lessons are usually well paced as teachers make the most of the time available and this promotes excellent behaviour.

- 3.22 Teachers' knowledge is used to good effect in the planning of lessons, which take due account of what the pupils have learnt before. The more successful lessons make good use of open-ended questions to consolidate previous learning and to challenge pupils to think for themselves. Where teaching is less successful, it is over-directed leading to fewer opportunities for children to think for themselves and develop their independent thought. Pupils' learning is enhanced significantly by the considerable subject knowledge of the subject specialists and class teachers.
- 3.23 High quality support is provided for pupils with SEND. Teachers' planning usually makes effective use of the pupils' targeted individual education plans. In mathematics, the rapid mental calculations at the start of lessons take due account of the range of pupils' abilities. In lessons, well briefed teaching assistants often support a group of pupils with SEND. The few pupils with EAL are provided with helpful support from their teacher or a teaching assistant to make sure that these pupils understand the task and what is required of them. Excellent use is made of the good quality resources.
- 3.24 Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. The pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very supportive of the teaching they receive. The parents' responses to the questionnaire showed that they were very appreciative of the support provided for very able pupils and that pupils who needed extra support for their learning were well served.
- 3.25 Work is marked regularly and consistently. Pupils are provided with encouraging comments and, where appropriate, advice as to how they can improve their work. At times they are provided with a suitable target for which to aim. Pupils value the individual oral feedback they receive in addition to marking. A comprehensive and detailed range of standardised assessments is used from the end of Reception to Year 6. These provide useful information on all aspects of the pupils' achievement; information from these assessments is securely collated within an effective system for monitoring the pupils' progress and for planning future work. Assessment information is used profitably to advise pupils and their parents on the choice of senior schools.

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 is reflected in the harmonious relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils thrive in the atmosphere of trust and security in line with the schools aims. In the EYFS, children are happy, confident and enthusiastic. They are keen to work and play either independently or in groups, to co-operate, share, concentrate and to respond to challenges. They follow the clear guidance they receive about what constitutes acceptable behaviour. They form trusting relationships with other children and with staff. In the Nursery, they take turns and co-operate well; those in Reception take on classroom responsibilities. From the parent-and-toddler group onwards, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, pupils' spiritual development is excellent. The pupils have a well-developed sense of the spiritual that reflects the school's strong Christian ethos. Pupils are confident and express themselves and their feelings clearly, and have high self-esteem. Pupils' imagination, inspiration and insight are enhanced by the opportunities to participate in a variety of musical and dramatic productions. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on their experiences. They explore feelings and emotions, developing values and principles to embrace life. During a 'Think Week' organised with a local church, pupils across the school explored faith and spirituality through a range of thought provoking activities, covering topics such as togetherness, forgiveness and thankfulness.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is well advanced. They acquire a strong moral code, very effectively supported by the school's distinctive ethos. Pupils justify their opinions, actions and decisions, and present them clearly with well-thought-through arguments and with feeling on moral issues such as racial prejudice. They have an excellent understanding of what is right or wrong in a moral sense, not just adhering to rules. Pupils understand and readily accept the need for rules and boundaries. They acquire an excellent appreciation of those less fortunate, aptly demonstrated through answering the question at harvest time, 'Is there enough food for everyone to eat?' instigating continual donations throughout the year to the food bank.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils are exceptionally courteous, caring and considerate towards others. All are proud of their school and feel valued and appreciated. Pupils of all ages accept responsibility with enthusiasm responding well to the considerable opportunities provided for them, for example as house captains, as representatives on the school council, and as monitors, known as 'Red Caps' in Year 2. They carry out their duties with a calm confidence and authority. Pupils clearly understand the importance and contribution of their service to the school community. They have a well-developed understanding of citizenship. They understand the need for laws in society and learn how these are made in parliament. Pupils have a social conscience and give support to local, national and international charities.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is good. They develop a strong knowledge of world faiths through their lessons in religious education. Pupils gain an effective understanding of the practices, beliefs and arts of other cultures through many aspects of the curriculum. For example, music and art from India is explored. Pupils and adults from other countries enrich the curriculum sharing their experiences and

knowledge. Pupils from a range of cultural backgrounds play and work together harmoniously. They are confident about sharing their experience of home worship. They respect the values and beliefs of others and believe that racism is a form of bullying and is not tolerated. A sense of community spirit and harmony pervades the school.

- 4.7 The pupils' excellent personal development means that, by the time they leave the school, they exhibit confidence, have a clear understanding of the needs of others and are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The excellent pastoral care makes an important contribution to the high quality of pupils' personal development. The school amply fulfils its aims in providing care that is much appreciated by pupils and their parents, as indicated in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires.
- 4.10 The provision in the EYFS for the children's well-being is good. Staff are excellent role models and provide consistent and clear guidance for children about what is acceptable behaviour, giving positive praise. Relationships are very strong and children learn to respect and tolerate each other. Children are building a very good understanding of road safety and care in the sun as well as why it is important to have a healthy diet and the need for physical exercise. Practitioners support children in becoming independent and in managing their own personal needs.
- 4.11 Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils are excellent. They demonstrate high levels of mutual trust. Adults provide high quality support and guidance for the pupils. Adults and pupils show high levels of courtesy for each other. Whole staff briefings on a daily basis ensure that the pastoral needs of pupils are regularly discussed, reviewed, recorded and acted upon, demonstrating excellent management of their care. Pupils commented that there is a member of staff they can turn to if they have a personal difficulty.
- 4.12 The school is effective in promoting and nurturing good behaviour. Highly effective procedures prevent harassment and bullying, and the school deals constructively with any unacceptable behaviour. Pupils commented to inspectors that they did not believe there was any bullying in the school and are confident that issues would be dealt with swiftly and successfully. This is reflected in the school's recording arrangements of any misbehaviour. Sanctions and rewards are pertinent to the ages and needs of pupils and judged by pupils to be fair. Good behaviour is visibly promoted around the school with posters displaying the 'Golden Rules' which are referred to frequently.
- 4.13 Pupils are encouraged to enjoy a healthy diet through snack times and a recently reviewed healthy and nutritious menu is served in an attractively refurbished dining room. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a good range of sporting activities, both in and out of curriculum time, which give opportunities to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. The pupils acquire a good appreciation of staying healthy through their learning in science and PSHE.
- 4.14 A small minority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed the opinion that their views were not always listened to. Inspection evidence demonstrates that the recently established school council, with class

representatives, provides useful opportunities for pupils to express their views. The council has made suggestions, which have been tried, to serve hot dogs for lunch and implement paired reading across the school. The pupils consequently feel valued and believe that they have a voice in the school community. In addition they have access to a suggestion box where they can post their ideas. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 Adults in the EYFS ensure that the children are safeguarded. The procedures for first aid and fire evacuation are well-known. Educational visits are organised with the safety of children paramount. Thorough reminders are given to children about safety matters on a day-to-day basis.
- 4.17 In the whole school, close attention is paid to safeguarding the pupils. The school has acted promptly to review its arrangements and policy to comply with the recent changes in guidance. The policies and procedures for safeguarding all pupils are secure. The designated persons for child protection are well experienced, have received the required training and are familiar with the new guidance. They provide a useful resource for all staff who have had appropriate training. Effective links have been made with local agencies. A designated governor has a specific responsibility for safeguarding and meets regularly with the designated persons. Following a safeguarding issue regarding e-safety, appropriate training was provided promptly for pupils, staff and parents, demonstrating an effective response by the school.
- 4.18 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills take place and staff have received appropriate training. Fire prevention systems are checked regularly. Clear risk assessments for all aspects of school life are reviewed frequently. The health and safety committee meets regularly and any necessary action is taken. Recently reviewed policies for health and safety are now implemented. Appropriate provision is made in the medical room for pupils who are sick or injured. Educational visits are planned thoroughly, with due attention to pupils' health and safety.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and kept for three years. Thorough checks are made by administrative staff to ensure a pupil's well-being if a pupil is absent and the school has not been notified in advance.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governors maintain good oversight of the school and are very supportive and keen to ensure that the character of the school meets the key aim of providing a caring family atmosphere in which pupils prosper. The range of expertise within the governing body is used efficiently. A completed skills audit is undertaken effectively in the appointment of new governors to further enhance this expertise. A well-defined committee structure supports the school effectively and governors undertake training on significant aspects of their responsibilities, including safeguarding. Early years provision has not been fully developed. Action is being taken by the school to strengthen this leadership through deployment of the head of Lower School although this arrangement was not in place during the inspection. Financial planning is robust as seen in the enhancement of the facilities in recent years which are in a good state of repair and kept very clean. High quality staff and resources are provided.
- 5.3 Experienced leadership enables governors to have a secure understanding of the standards the school seeks to provide and the ethos that should prevail. The education and staffing committee effectively oversees pupils' achievements. Governors regularly visit school and often observe lessons. They are well informed by the reports from the head and presentations from members of staff which enable them to challenge and support the school's growth and improvement.
- 5.4 Governors take their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare and health and safety seriously. However action was required during the inspection to tighten some processes and procedures to ensure full compliance with all regulatory requirements. The safeguarding procedures are reviewed by the full governing body on an annual basis. The effectiveness of the current arrangements is hampered by the lack of a framework underpinned by clear evidence to demonstrate that the review has fully considered all aspects of policy and the effectiveness with which it is applied in day to day use across the whole school. In line with its aims, pupils' achievements and welfare are at the heart of the school and its governance.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are strong. This is reflected in the responses of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire where almost all felt that the school was well managed. However, the arrangements for the management of reception and early years provision at the time of the inspection were not as clearly defined. The school is aware of this matter and has taken steps to appoint a dedicated manager for this aspect of the school. Overall, the school is led with drive and energy and the senior management team works highly effectively and collaboratively to provide a clear educational direction for the school. They have drawn up comprehensive policies for all aspects of the school's life which are mostly implemented and monitored effectively. The high quality of achievement and the excellent pastoral care reflect the strength of the leadership.

- 5.7 The school recognises the need to strengthen some aspects of leadership and management for EYFS, for example, and the use of the early years checklist in order to monitor progress. Some adjustments were also required by the school during inspection to ensure that staff supervision levels during playtimes continued to meet the required staff/child ratio during a period of staff absence.
- 5.8 Professional staff development and liaison with the local authority have helped staff to improve their knowledge and understanding. Appraisal and the setting's self-evaluation and oversight of the educational and welfare provision contribute to the development plan for the whole school. Safeguarding is a continuing priority and is effectively monitored. Provision for after-school care is adequate and undergoing further improvement. Partnerships with external agencies and parents are used when required to support children.
- 5.9 The school has successfully addressed a recommendation from the previous inspection that it should ensure detailed development planning. A systematic approach to the monitoring, reviewing and development of all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, has been drawn up and implemented. A detailed plan for the development of the subject co-ordinator's role has been established and has been successfully implemented. The subject co-ordinators play an important part in the school's life. They regularly observe teaching and provide detailed feedback to their colleagues on how to make improvements. They scrutinise pupils' completed work which provides useful information for the senior management team to act upon. This represents an excellent improvement since the previous inspection and contributes significantly to pupils' progress. The school's current development plan highlights important areas for improvement with times given for implementation and criteria for judging success.
- 5.10 Senior managers have a clear understanding of their statutory duties for the safeguarding of pupils and all staff have undergone recent training for their roles as designated senior persons. Staff induction is carefully organised to include safeguarding and health and safety matters. The programme is monitored. Continuing professional development of staff is a high priority for management. Staff develop their skills through appropriate training activities both within school and externally, and through the appraisal arrangements. Recruitment checks for staff, volunteers and governors are thorough and suitably recorded on a central register.
- 5.11 The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. School leaders and staff have contributed to significant improvements which have been achieved over the past six years. Very good systems of communication within the school ensure a sense of involvement and purpose and enable any difficulties to be resolved at an early stage.
- 5.12 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were highly supportive of the education provided by the school. They were particularly appreciative: of the range of subjects provided; that their children were safe and happy; and they were pleased with the progress their children make. In the EYFS, parents were also highly supportive of the education and care provided. Strong links with parents are well established, meet the children's needs and promotes their well-being.
- 5.13 A small minority of parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed concerns about the information they received about their child's' progress. Inspection findings indicate that parents are provided with suitable information. Detailed subject reports are provided twice a year which give useful

information, and further regular progress reports are compiled. Parents' open evenings inform parents of their child's progress. Parents are involved in detailed interviews in Year 5 which provide help and advice as decisions are being made about their children's move to senior school. Parents of children who are in the EYFS are kept well informed of their child's progress.

- 5.14 Parents appreciate the range of helpful and relevant information that is available for them. A detailed handbook is provided. The informative half-termly *Micklefield Messenger* keeps parents abreast of the life of the school, together with other regular communications such as *Clarion Call*. Information evenings are provided to enable parents to gain a working knowledge of aspects of the curriculum such as the teaching of phonics (linking sounds with letters) and mathematics. Parents have access to the school's informative website. Parents, including those who are in the EYFS, have many and varied opportunities to be involved with the school. Grandparents' days are held in the Nursery. Parents are involved with educational visits, supporting matches and making costumes for the drama productions. A parent representative from each class meets regularly with the head. An excellent parent-and-toddler group meets regularly each week.
- 5.15 The thriving parents association, Friends of Micklefield School, contributes significantly to the life of the school. It has provided a room for meetings and welcomes new parents through social and fund-raising events.
- 5.16 The complaints policy is suitable and readily available to parents. The school handles the small number of concerns of parents promptly and with sensitivity in line with its policy. The vast majority of parental responses commented that the school has handled well any concerns they may have had. Concerns and queries raised by parents are handled promptly and sensitively by the school.
- 5.17 The school successfully fulfils the aims of creating an environment where trust and security help the pupils to thrive.

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