



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
THE SWAMINARAYAN SCHOOL**

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The Swaminarayan School

Full Name of School	The Swaminarayan School
DfE Number	304/6074
EYFS Number	EY 240879
Registered Charity Number	1023731
Address	The Swaminarayan School 260 Brentfield Road Neasden London NW10 8HE
Telephone Number	020 8965 8381
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Email Address	admin@tssuk.org
Head teachers	Senior School: Mr Nilesh Manani Preparatory School: Mr Umesh Raja
Chair of Governors	Mr Piyush Amin
Age Range	2 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	494
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (260 boys; 234 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 11 5-11: 226 3-5 (EYFS): 60 11-18: 197
Head of EYFS Setting	Ms Mrig Divecha
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	07 Oct 2014 to 10 Oct 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 September 2008.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the 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. 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

Mr Ian Newton	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Sue Clarke	Team Inspector (Director of Sixth Form, HMC school)
Mrs Janet Cooper	Team Inspector (Former Head of Junior School, ISA school)
Mr Brian Hays	Team Inspector (Director of Co-Curriculum, HMC school)
Mr Rick Raumann	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Jonathan Ullmer	Team Inspector (Principal, ISA school)
Mrs Yvonne Parry	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Swaminarayan School was founded in Neasden in 1992 by His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj to provide a British day education for boys and girls, based firmly within the Hindu ethos, culture and tradition. From its opening with 80 pupils it has grown to the present total of 494, of whom 234 are girls and 260 boys.
- 1.2 The school is divided into the preparatory school, for pupils up to age eleven, and the senior school, for pupils up to age eighteen. Since the previous inspection, the role of principal has been abolished and the head teachers of the preparatory and senior schools now report directly to the governing body, and are responsible for all aspects of the running of each school.
- 1.3 Of the pupils in the preparatory school, 71 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for pupils between two and five years of age. The governing body, to whom the responsibility for oversight of the school is delegated, and the trustees, who meet twice a year with the governors, are all members of the congregation of the adjacent Hindu Mandir or temple. Pupils are drawn from a wide area in north-west London, from both Hindu and non-Hindu families. They are almost exclusively of Asian Indian ethnicity.
- 1.4 Pupils are admitted following a variety of assessment procedures depending on their age. The ability profile of the school is, for the most part, above the national average; the ability profile of the sixth form is slightly above the national average of pupils in sixth-form education nationally. Although almost all the pupils come from families where English is not the first or only language spoken, the great majority become fluent in English early in the school; the school does not provide formal support for English as an additional language (EAL), though it does provide informal support in the EYFS. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. However, twenty-eight preparatory pupils and eight senior pupils have been identified as needing extra support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.5 The school aims to promote Hindu culture, values and way of life; to enable pupils to become 'life-long learners'; to continue to raise academic standards; to give pupils the opportunity to engage in a wide range of activities; to develop well-adjusted and well-rounded young people within a caring community; to instil a sense of concern, awe and wonder about the world; and to establish strong links with the wider community.

- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Age 2-3
Nursery	Age 4
Reception	Age 5

Senior School.

Senior 1 (S1)	Year 7
Senior 2 (S2)	Year 8
Senior 3 (S3)	Year 9
Senior 4 (S4)	Year 10
Senior 5 (S5)	Year 11
6i	Year 12
6ii	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Swaminarayan School enables pupils to obtain excellent standards in their work and to develop outstanding qualities as young people. They are mature, reflective and self-confident, and show considerable commitment to and interest in their work. They value the spiritual and ethical basis of school life and contribute much to the school and wider communities. They combine this with achieving excellent results in public examinations throughout the school, and with achieving success in a wide range of activities. Pupils in the EYFS receive an outstanding preparation for the move into Year 1, and these secure foundations support continued excellent progress thereafter. Both at GCSE and in the sixth form, pupils benefit from first-class curricular arrangements, and from a wide-ranging programme of activities. Arrangements for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) have been improved since the previous inspection, and new staff appointed to support pupils with SEND.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is fostered by the life of faith within the school, and by excellent pastoral care from staff, who give appropriate attention to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Relationships between pupils and staff are extremely supportive, as are those between pupils themselves. Assemblies, both in school and in the temple, give pupils frequent opportunities for reflection. Excellent teaching throughout the school supports pupils' academic progress, and provides a good focus on meeting different pupils' needs. However, marking is less consistent in showing pupils how to improve the level of scholarship in their work.
- 2.3 The quality of governance and that of leadership and management are excellent. These qualities support the extremely high standard of work done in all areas of the school. A very large majority of responses from parents and pupils in pre-inspection questionnaires were extremely positive about the school; parents particularly valued the support given to their children. Across the school, strong teamwork enables all staff to work together in pursuit of the school's aims, and enable it to remain a community of faith drawn together by a shared heritage and experience.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that marking always shows pupils how to develop further the level of scholarship in their work.
 2. Include the EYFS more fully in whole-school development planning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, both pupils and parents are delighted with pupils' progress. The school fully meets its aims to develop high academic standards, and to develop life-long learners.

Preparatory school

- 3.3 Pupils of all ages are highly articulate and write both fluently and accurately; they project their voices well, for example in public speaking. Although, for almost all pupils, English is not their first language, they achieve an excellent grasp of literacy. Young pupils write imaginative adventure stories. Older ones translate French accurately. Pupils apply an excellent understanding of mathematics to solving problems. They use logic and independent thought to put forward theories about shape. They grasp the nature of forces, and draw thinking maps to explain their understanding. Their outstanding performance of traditional dances shows high levels of creativity and physical dexterity, coupled with a deep understanding of the traditions of their faith. Pupils make appropriate use of information and communication technology (ICT). In addition, the school has achieved success in mathematics competitions, excellent results in drama and performing arts examinations, and individual success in activities such as Tae-Kwon-Do, cricket, short story writing and world spelling. School sports teams are successful in local competitions. Pupils are successful in examinations for senior schools.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at age 11 were exceptional in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. This level of attainment, taken with the quality of work seen in school, shows that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND progress equally well in their use of language as a result of the support they receive; additional challenge in many lessons ensures that the most able are fully challenged and also progress well.
- 3.5 In class pupils show exceptional perseverance and application. They are diligent, co-operate willingly and productively, and listen to and respect each others' views. They show imagination in art, empathy and respect in PSHCE, and share the results of their research in science. They try different methods of solving problems, take considerable pride in their work, and answer questions with enthusiasm.

Senior school

- 3.6 Senior pupils show a high level of understanding and complex thought, whether making perceptive observations on poetry, studying theoretical ideas in science or analysing sources in history. When given the opportunity, they show excellent practical skills in science. They generally have excellent mathematical skills and use their outstanding grasp of logic, for example when thinking out why gravity varies from planet to planet. Artwork shows considerable creativity and individuality. Pupils make appropriate use of ICT and show good levels of skill in sport. An assembly demonstrated excellent standards of performance, combined with the ability to portray a meaningful message. In some subjects, but not in all, pupils engage well in research, reading a range of texts to increase their depth of knowledge. Outside class, pupils perform well in mathematics and physics competitions, and gain excellent results in performing arts examinations in Indian traditional culture. In addition, pupils perform in a wide range of venues, including the Indian High Commission. Sports teams are successful in local championships. A high proportion of students are successful in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Pupils succeed in gaining places in higher education.
- 3.7 Between 2011 and 2013, both GCSE and A-level results were above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. At GCSE, pupils gained nearly three times as many A*/A grades as the national average, in line with the proportion in selective schools. At A level, the proportion of pupils gaining A*/B grades was higher than the average for maintained schools, and again in line with that for maintained selective schools. This level of attainment, combined with standardised measures of progress and observations in school, shows that pupils make excellent progress throughout the school. Pupils with SEND make particularly good progress in literacy, as a result of the support they receive, enabling them to progress as well as their peers. Similarly, the most able pupils progress quickly, benefiting from additional challenge in class and other opportunities.
- 3.8 In lessons, pupils continue to work hard, persevere, respond well to questions and work extremely well with each other in pairs and groups. They articulate their own point of view, listen to the views of others, and demonstrate excellent speaking skills. They show considerable ability to develop their ideas over time and to apply their understanding to new situations.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 Both pupils and their parents were delighted with the range of subjects available to pupils. A small minority of pupils felt that the choice of activities was poor. Inspectors found that for its size there was an extensive range in each part of the school. The range of activities, the strength of links with the wider community, and synergy between the curriculum and Hindu culture all reflect the school's aims well.

Preparatory school

- 3.11 The curriculum combines a broad and balanced range of opportunities with the excellent development of core subjects. It is extremely well planned, suited to all ages and abilities, and covers all the required areas of learning including an effective PSHCE programme. Pupils' learning styles and cognitive profiles are well catered for, often by using questions to extend higher order thinking skills. Specialist

teaching includes Gujarati, physical education (PE), religious studies and French, and the curriculum is further enhanced by yoga, drama and philosophy for children. Emphasis on thinking, reading and oracy help develop highly articulate pupils. The increased provision for swimming, in response to parental concerns, supports healthy living. The school fosters excellent links with the local community, for example inviting senior citizens to the Diwali assembly and visiting an elderly persons' home to present harvest festival contributions. Other visitors, and inter-school sports and competitions, enhance pupils' experience further.

- 3.12 The excellent range of extra-curricular activities and visits enable pupils to widen and develop their interests. Many contribute to their academic, creative and sporting achievement and to their wider personal development; the contribution of yoga and meditation to pupils' spiritual development is exceptional. The programme of educational visits includes a visit to a local furniture outlet where pupils use their mathematical skills in a practical way, and residential trips to develop pupils' independence. The wide range of opportunities in school includes both artistic and sporting activities, opportunities to perform in shows, and encouragement to develop personal talent outside school, for example by working with local sports clubs.

Senior school

- 3.13 The school provides an imaginative curriculum, which emphasises core subjects whilst embedding cultural experiences. It suits all ages, abilities and needs, and covers all the required areas of learning. In addition to the core subjects, the curriculum in Years 7 and 8 is enriched by the addition of Gujarati and Indian performing arts. The curriculum is successful in providing the opportunity for pupils to reach their full potential by commencing their GCSE courses in Year 9. The LAMDA course, taken by all pupils for at least two years, enables them to develop excellent speaking skills. The sixth-form curriculum provides a good choice of subjects. It includes an excellent range of enrichment activities, such as UK mathematics challenges and leadership training, and develops well the pupils' curiosity, independence and confidence.
- 3.14 The course in PHSCE is effective and carefully designed. Since the previous inspection, it has included an excellent careers programme, which is enhanced by a careers fair and optional psychometric testing.
- 3.15 The range of activities is varied and challenging. They range from fencing, snowboarding and rock climbing to mathematical modelling and debating. These take place both on site and at a variety of nearby venues, and include open water canoeing and kayaking at a local water sports centre. Sports clubs are extremely well supported, enabling the school to field teams in local competitions in a wide range of sports. Almost all Year 10 and 11 pupils are working towards the silver award in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. In recent years senior pupils have instigated clubs for junior pupils and thus developed leadership skills.

Whole school

- 3.16 Pupils with SEND in both schools are well supported by the learning support department, which plans individual provision for pupils with assistance from teachers and external agencies. Training has taken place for all staff on the new frameworks, and tracking systems in both schools support on-going development. Extensive informal and formal contact between the school and parents allows provision to be monitored carefully. Pupils receive support from their classroom teachers and recent new appointments are allowing increased support to be available.

- 3.17 The most able pupils are supported effectively through the provision of differing approaches in lessons, appropriate adjustments to the curriculum and a variety of clubs and other activities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 The pupils are very positive about the quality of teaching. The great majority say that they find work interesting, that teachers help them to learn and that they get individual help when they need it. Almost all say they are encouraged to work independently. The high quality of teaching supports the school's aim to achieve high academic standards.

Preparatory school

- 3.20 The extremely high proportion of good and excellent teaching reflects the high quality of planning in the great majority of lessons, which has been improved since the previous inspection. Activities are built up well and carefully chosen to make pupils think. Tasks are almost always carefully matched to pupils' differing abilities and needs, so that they are both challenged and supported well. Teachers set high expectations, whilst providing excellent support for those with SEND. Both teachers and, for younger pupils, teaching assistants, give excellent help to individuals. In a few lessons, work is less well matched to pupils' abilities, or tasks are less interesting.
- 3.21 Teachers manage lessons extremely well, making good use of their own expertise and the excellent relationships they have with pupils. They set a brisk pace and thus maintain pupils' focus well, so that both behaviour and participation are almost always good. They set a quiet, calm atmosphere. Teachers generally make excellent use of question-and-answer, checking pupils' understanding at the end of the lesson and encouraging pupils to think for themselves; in some lessons, teaching does not engage all pupils equally in responding to questions. Resources are used well.
- 3.22 Assessment is excellent. Standardised, diagnostic and routine tests help to identify learning strengths and weaknesses and the results used effectively in teachers' planning. Teachers' records are thorough and there is excellent communication between them to discuss individuals' needs.
- 3.23 Marking is regular across all subjects, and generally shows pupils how to improve their work. Good use is made of 'traffic lights' for self-assessment, and peer assessment is also encouraged. Teachers frequently ask children 'thinking questions' to extend or deepen their understanding, and these are promptly answered by pupils, although limited opportunities are given for pupils to edit their work using the success criteria that are already a feature of lessons.

Senior school

- 3.24 The extremely high proportion of excellent teaching reflects the way teaching provides well for the range of pupils' abilities in the great majority of lessons. Individual support enables pupils who find work hard to progress well and in most lessons, though not in all, additional challenge is provided for the more able. Lessons are managed well, and conducted with a brisk pace and lively manner, which engage pupils fully. Frequently, teachers make excellent use of questions to stimulate pupils' independent thinking and to monitor their progress. At best, questioning allows space and scope for thought and reflection, thus deepening pupils' understanding.
- 3.25 Teachers make skilful use of a range of approaches and resources, drawing well on their own expertise. Their excellent relationship with pupils supports both good behaviour and a high level of engagement.
- 3.26 Academic data is used very effectively to identify and respond to pupils' learning needs and to measure progress. Work is marked regularly and pupils understand the grades awarded and departmental expectations. At its best, marking is detailed, with comments to help pupils to improve, which pupils much appreciate, but it is common for marked work to lack guidance for further improvement. Pupils speak highly of the helpful oral feedback they receive when work is returned in lessons.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school meets its aims of developing well-adjusted and well-rounded young people, and instilling a sense of concern, awe and wonder about the world around them, extremely well.
- 4.3 The pupils are confident, reflective and self-aware, and a sense of calm and spiritual awareness pervades the school. Many lessons start in prayer and, in both temple and school assemblies, pupils reflect thoughtfully on spiritual issues and their response. They show considerable self-confidence, for example, when presenting the preparatory school harvest festival or a senior school assembly on following your heart; in response, all present were focused on the issues involved. In interviews, pupils said they valued the school's spiritual heritage, which they felt complemented their own faith or secular outlook. They show emotional maturity, both in discussion and in their response to personal issues. The school, and the pupils within it, are inclusive of all, whatever their faith or belief.
- 4.4 Pupils' sense of moral values is extremely strong. They use the weekly thoughts written by the Head in the senior diaries and divided into 'Think', 'Feel' and 'Do' to link their values to daily life. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, and understand the need for high standards of behaviour. Large sums of money have been raised for charity and pupils are actively engaged in supporting others, both within and beyond the school community. They have a very well-developed sense of obligation to those less fortunate than themselves, and are enthusiastic about supporting younger pupils.
- 4.5 A wide range of activities supports the pupils' excellent social skills. They relate extremely well to people of all ages, being particularly welcoming to visitors. A small minority of pupils said in the questionnaires that they did not have enough opportunities to take on responsibility. Inspection evidence showed that in both schools, the concept of leadership through service is strongly engrained; for example pupils lead prayers in class or assembly, or act as peer mediators, house captains, preparatory school peer buddies and mentors. In addition, all Year 11 pupils undertake the service element of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and sixth formers undertake at least one hour of service a week, ranging from charity fund raising, cake sales and running sports tournaments to helping younger pupils with reading. Pupils in Years 9 and 10 learn about their wider role in society, and the role of law and democracy, with a certificated citizenship course.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is very strong, and they are tolerant and accepting of others. The school's ethos supports British values and mutual respect. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures, as well as of their own. The temple encourages a sense of awe and wonder. There are wide opportunities for cultural enrichment such as an art lesson on Rangoli designs, which are used in Diwali celebrations, and detailed displays showed work on major religions such as Christianity, Buddhism and Sikhism. The school has won awards for its work in drama.
- 4.7 The pupils' personal development is outstanding, and they grow up into reflective, mature and responsible young people.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 This quality of pastoral care reflects the aim of providing a caring community, which promotes the school's culture, values and way of life. In their questionnaire responses, the vast majority of the parents said that their children were happy and felt safe, that the school looked after them well, and that there were high standards of behaviour.

Preparatory school

- 4.10 The excellent care and support underpin the excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils of all ages; as a result pupils feel valued, safe and secure, and trust the adults in the school.
- 4.11 Excellent behaviour is promoted by encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions. A small minority of pupils said in responses to the questionnaires that rewards and sanctions were not always fair. In discussion, pupils said they thought everyone had the same opportunities for success and rewards were distributed fairly. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy but incidents are very rare and pupils said that they are dealt with promptly and effectively. Teachers are trained to deal with any issues that arise. Peer mediators, trained older juniors, help resolve playground issues.
- 4.12 Junior council members voice suggestions at meetings, and feel appropriately involved in the running of their school. Pupils said that they were confident that their views were listened to and, when appropriate, acted upon; several recent changes have included the provision of fans in classrooms, hot chocolate to drink, more and different salad ingredients for lunch and new playground equipment.

Senior school

- 4.13 The pastoral structure provides a strong framework within which pupils feel safe and well supported. House tutors see pupils daily, and are the main contact for parents. House teams meet weekly to review pupils' pastoral welfare and academic performance. The pupils support each other and their relationships, both with each other and with staff, are warm and friendly.
- 4.14 Pupils' behaviour is excellent; they show respect and consideration to each other. Questionnaire responses recorded that a significant minority of pupils felt that bullying was not dealt with properly and that teachers were not fair with rewards and sanctions. Pupils spoken to said that bullying or harassment are not common and that any minor incidents are dealt with effectively. The awarding of rewards and sanctions was found to be generally fair, although some girls felt that they received favourable treatment.
- 4.15 In answering questionnaires, pupils said that the school did not respond to their opinions. Inspection evidence showed that changes are made in response to pupils' views. Pupils said that recent improvements in response to school council suggestions included the location of drinking fountains, the provision of outdoor seating and variation in the food at lunchtime.

Whole school

- 4.16 Pupils are well informed about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The school provides fresh food, cooked on the premises. Lunch times are well organised and the atmosphere is relaxed and sociable. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of physical exercise.
- 4.17 The school has suitable plans to improve educational access for pupils with SEND. The school is careful to give all pupils equivalent opportunities.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 The school gives a high priority to safeguarding, ensuring that any issues are dealt with properly and liaising carefully with local agencies where necessary. Staff are properly trained in child protection. Appropriate care is taken over recruitment, and staff are carefully briefed about suitable protocols in their dealings with pupils. The leadership of safeguarding arrangements is strong and robust, with governors having appropriate oversight and conducting an annual review.
- 4.20 The school takes all necessary steps to reduce the risk from fire; it takes prompt action when issues of fire safety are identified, and it conducts regular equipment checks and termly fire drills. Similarly, matters of health and safety are overseen properly. Pupils are carefully supervised when playing outside. Care is taken to separate pupils from traffic both at the beginning and end of the school day, and on the occasions when vehicles need access during it. The school has suitable accommodation for any pupils who are sick or injured.
- 4.21 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governors bring considerable commitment and expertise to their work. Close liaison between governors and trustees enables a clear vision to be maintained for the school's work. Governors provide strong support to the management of education, finance, business, staffing, premises and resources, and are aware of the need to refurbish or replace areas needing attention such as the gymnasium.
- 5.3 The governors show a good insight into the school's strengths and issues for development, based on meetings with staff, visits to classes and talking to pupils. The minutes of full governing body meetings show efficient management of school business, and the education committee gives proper attention to educational matters, including standards, providing challenge and stimulus as required. Individual governors have given many years service to the school, providing continuity during a period of growth and change, but governors lack a plan to ensure renewal and succession.
- 5.4 Governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for monitoring statutory requirements, including conducting an annual review of safeguarding arrangements.

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.
- 5.6 The leadership of the school provides a clear moral compass, which guides every aspect of school life. The senior teams of both schools provide clear strategic direction and educational focus, which strongly support the aims of the whole school and enable pupils to achieve at a high level in both preparatory and senior schools. Effective subject links exist between the two schools. The school development plan reflects purpose and direction at all levels and sets clear priorities for both educational and personal development, though it focuses less sharply on the needs of the EYFS. Staff have been involved in setting these priorities; for example, teachers visit other schools to benchmark practice and return to share ideas and present them to others as the plans are formulated.
- 5.7 Appraisal systems support the development of the school, and staff share a clear sense of direction and ownership of the school's vision. Regular walkthroughs and lesson observations monitor and support learning in the classroom. The implementation of policies is scrutinised effectively, and reports to governors by a range of staff help ensure regulatory compliance. Staff are dedicated and hard-working, sharing strongly in the school's aims and ethos.
- 5.8 Safeguarding and safer recruitment are given a high priority, and the school follows the required procedures for the recruitment of staff. All teachers receive appropriate training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.

- 5.9 Both academic and pastoral leadership is strong, with effective formal and informal meetings occurring on a regular basis as appropriate. Those in charge of subjects have clear priorities and organise training sessions with their staff. Peer observations support teaching and learning, and there is much mutual support between the staff, who are extremely dedicated to supporting pupils' progress. Effective record keeping ensures that attainment is monitored. Recent developments in pastoral care have included the remodelling of the tutorial system. As a result, pupils are well supported and well cared for, supported by the leadership structures within houses.
- 5.10 The school enjoys excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the very large majority of parents was pleased with how safe and happy their children feel at school, the progress they make and the information available. A few parents expressed concerns over bullying. Inspectors found that the pupils to whom they spoke were confident that bullying was not an issue.
- 5.11 The school has a warm and constructive relationship with parents, which underpins its aim of working in close collaboration with families. The headteachers and staff are always readily available to speak to parents at the start and end of the day, and appointments can be made if there is a need for further discussion. Weekly newsletters, the school calendar, curricular information and workshops provide comprehensive information for parents of both new and existing pupils, and the website includes policies, parents' guides, menus and other useful material. Text and email alerts are also used. Parents have access to all the information that is required.
- 5.12 Parents have wide-ranging opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. In addition to regular scheduled parents' evening and termly school reports, home-school diaries provide a quick useful means of exchanging information; guidance is also provided to parents on how they can help at home. Written reports are generally informative but do not always consistently identify how pupils can improve their work.
- 5.13 A strong sense of community is fostered between parents and staff through the parents association, which organises many social and fund-raising events throughout the year. Parents are also actively encouraged to become involved in the life of the school by assisting with trips and visits and attending assemblies, concerts and sporting events.
- 5.14 Although in the past, arrangements and procedures were not fully robust, there have been no formal complaints under the present leadership structures and school has proper procedures for handling complaints and recording them.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The staff have high expectations for all children and meticulous planning, focused on effective learning, enthuses, engages, challenges and motivates them as it matches their needs and interests. In consequence, the majority of children reach and, in many cases, exceed the expected levels of development, preparing them well for the next stage of their learning. Educational programmes for children under three focus on the prime areas of learning and checks for two-year-olds have been implemented and shared with parents. Children with EAL, SEND and those who are especially gifted are identified early and supported effectively, so that they make good and often excellent progress from their starting points and capabilities. Specialist teaching of yoga, Gujarati, PE, religious studies and French enhances the early years provision.
- 6.2 The hard-working and committed staff have developed excellent relationships with parents and work in partnership with them to help children settle. Informative welcome packs show how parents can be involved with their children's learning. There are frequent opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's learning journeys. Parents' evenings, written reports and home-school diaries keep parents very well informed about their children's achievements and progress. In responses to the questionnaires and in interviews, parents expressed their considerable appreciation of the setting, emphasising how happy and safe their children feel, the caring staff and the ease of communication. Inspection evidence supported these views.

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

- 6.3 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is outstanding. The warm supportive atmosphere ensures that all children, especially the under three's and those with additional needs, form secure attachments to key people. The children's happiness, health and safety are of prime importance. Care practices, such as thorough risk assessments and timely reminders, encourage independent and imaginative play as children enjoy and explore challenges both inside and out. Staff provide excellent role models by their considerate, caring behaviour, and relationships between staff, children and parents are excellent. Consistent routines, particularly for children under the age of three, support the development of personal hygiene practices such as washing hands after messy activities. The importance of diet and a healthy lifestyle is reinforced through the curriculum and by the nutritious vegetarian lunches and snacks provided. Transition between age groups in the setting and beyond is thoughtfully managed ensuring that children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

- 6.4 The leadership and management are outstanding. Well-informed governance ensures that the regulatory requirements are met and the governing body has recently appointed an early years governor to enable it to give effective oversight.
- 6.5 The head of EYFS operates a systematic programme of appraisal and supervision, which identifies areas for professional and personal development and offers valuable support for staff. Regular meetings provide opportunities for staff to become more reflective practitioners, enabling them to monitor and evaluate practice and set challenging targets for the future. Currently the school development plan includes very few specific EYFS priorities, which mean that the specific needs of the EYFS children are not being sufficiently taken into account in a whole school context. All staff have a secure understanding of welfare, safeguarding and child protection procedures through regular training and utilise this knowledge to create a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment. Strong partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that children receive any support they may need.

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

- 6.6 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding. The learning and care children receive enable them to make good progress, with many making excellent progress, by the end of Reception. Children under three express themselves increasingly well, sing songs and rhymes, and enjoy mark making. In the Nursery, children know many letter sounds including the initial letter of their own name and begin to form letters correctly. Reception children continue to develop good phonic skills, which they use in reading and writing. The youngest children identify colours whilst older children sort and match by different criteria, recognise simple plane shapes and count objects accurately with some older pupils understanding number values up to 30.
- 6.7 The learning and care provided by key people ensure that the needs of all children are met. Teaching is based on careful review of each child's progress and ensures those with EAL and SEND are well supported, enabling them to make good progress from a range of starting points. More able children are given extra support and challenge.
- 6.8 Children's personal and social development is outstanding. They help each other, quickly absorb the school's Hindu ethos and values and show exemplary behaviour. The youngest children manage their personal needs independently. Through celebrating different cultures and backgrounds, they develop mutual understanding and respect. The key person system is effective and children feel secure and happy. Welfare and safeguarding procedures are secure, and risk assessments and fire procedures are well known. Staff are extremely conscientious and children's well-being is their highest priority, ensuring that children feel safe, secure and happy.
- 6.9 Leadership and management within the setting have high expectations providing a strong commitment to evaluating practice and a clear vision for future development to enhance children's life chances. The recommendations of the previous Ofsted inspection have been met.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

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