



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

GATEWAY SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Gateway School

Full Name of School	Gateway School
DfE Number	825/6000
EYFS Number	EY337179
Address	Gateway School 1 High Street Great Missenden Buckinghamshire HP16 9AA
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Head	Mrs Susan La Farge
Director of Schools	Mr Steven Wade
Age Range	2 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	330
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (190 boys; 140 girls)
Numbers by Age	2-5 (EYFS): 58 5-11: 272
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Suzanne Kemp
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	03 Mar 2015 to 06 Mar 2015

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 January 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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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 Keith Morrow	Reporting Inspector
Mr Howard Tuckett	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS School)
Mrs Linda Griffith	Team Inspector (Retired Head, ISA School)
Mr Kim Parsley	Team Inspector (Retired Assistant Head, IAPS School)
Mrs Jane Morgan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Gateway School is a co-educational independent day school situated on the edge of Great Missenden village in Buckinghamshire. The school was founded in the 1950s and was taken over by the Wade family in 1982. The school was acquired by the Bellevue Education Group (BEG) in January 2012, which owns eleven independent schools in England. The governance role is fulfilled by BEG's Chief Education Officer and the Education Director. BEG has an education committee that reviews the school's performance. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has its own purpose-built unit for children from the ages of two to five years.
- 1.2 The school's ethos is to build a foundation for pupils that equips them with the skills and confidence they need for life, both now and in the future. The school seeks to develop and celebrate the individual talents and abilities of each child whilst instilling a love of learning. Gateway School aims to encourage a child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm, whilst developing their independence and self-discipline.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, two new senior classroom blocks have been built, which house the library, specialist senior teaching spaces and tutor rooms. Outside play space has been improved by the addition of a climbing wall and a fitness trail. In addition, there is a fenced all-weather playing surface. The present head has been in post since September 2013 and the school's senior management team has been re-established with clear roles and responsibilities.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 140 girls and 190 boys on roll; 58 were in the EYFS, of whom 20 were full-time and 38 part-time. The main school is organised into a junior section for pupils from Reception to Year 3, with Years 4 to 6 being known as the senior school. Pupils are predominantly from a white professional class background and most live within the village of Great Missenden and the surrounding area. The school runs a holiday club out of term time to cater for children from the age of 3 to 11 years.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with most cohorts demonstrating a wide spread of abilities, and most pupils of at least average ability, and some well above average. Forty pupils are identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The range of additional needs includes pupils with dyslexia, dyspraxia, language disorders and developmental co-ordination disorder. There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
- 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 for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	Age of Children
EYU	2 to 3
EYU	3 to 4
Reception	4 to 5

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning is excellent. The school meets its aim to encourage a child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm to gain the learning and life skills needed for their future. Children in the EYFS make outstanding progress, including in their literacy and numeracy skills. Planning for the outdoor curriculum, recommended in the previous EYFS inspection is now a strength of the setting. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND make very good progress compared with pupils of similar abilities. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, they achieve results in national tests in reading, writing and maths at the age of 11 that are well above those of pupils in maintained primary schools. Pupils' learning is characterised by strong collaborative work, many opportunities for practical investigations and challenges, and strong creative skills that are woven throughout the curriculum. Teaching is mostly good or excellent and only occasionally satisfactory, where the most able are not always fully extended. Pupils' work is marked, but does not consistently follow the marking policy, resulting in next steps in learning not always being made clear to pupils.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent, including in most areas of the EYFS. Pupils are cooperative, show empathy for each other and behave well, including during break times. However, in EYFS, the development of specific personal and social skills is not fully exploited at these times. Throughout the school, pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and are very well supported by the school's personal, health, social and education (PHSE) programme 'learning for life'. Pastoral care is excellent and the school guards against bullying, taking effective and prompt action when it is reported by parents or pupils. Pupils' medical needs are well provided for by qualified staff and parents kept informed of any treatment. Checks on new staff are secure and the school has effective arrangements for recruiting staff.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent and governors contribute towards the overall vision and realisation of the school's aims through providing challenge and support to the school's strong leadership. Prudent financial planning has enabled the governors to support the development and improvement of resources to maximise pupils' opportunities for learning. Leadership and management are good. The small senior management team is effectively led and now has greater clarity of purpose and a collegiate approach to school improvement. Subject leadership is developing and in some subjects, subject leaders are able to share best practice with colleagues across other schools in the same ownership. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. Links with parents and carers are excellent throughout the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the marking policy is fully implemented consistently throughout the school, including identifying next steps so that pupils are clear how to improve;
2. Strengthen the school's leadership structure, ensuring that all curriculum areas benefit from the clear direction of subject leaders.
3. Within the EYFS, maximise opportunities for personal and social development at lunch and snack times.

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' achievement is excellent.
- 3.2 The pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to encourage learning and life skills for the future. From Year 1, high standards of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills extend into their curricular and extra-curricular activities. Pupils demonstrate a broad range of knowledge and express their thoughts with mature clarity. Pupils usually listen respectfully to their teachers and peers alike. They develop excellent speaking and listening skills, and make an excellent start to reading and writing in EYFS. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those identified as able, gifted and talented (AGT) achieve high standards of literacy, enjoying a wide range of literature and writing imaginatively and factually as required. Numeracy skills are strong; pupils are well able to think independently and logically and show evident enjoyment in solving challenges in mathematics, science and design technology.
- 3.3 The school's focus on well-integrated information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that high level skills are achieved by pupils at all stages of their education and that they are self-confident in using ICT as a tool to enhance their learning. Pupils have well-developed creative skills, evidenced in the colourful and informative displays around the school. Pupils who require learning support achieve high standards in line with their abilities as a consequence of carefully targeted individual teaching and close liaison between adults resulting in strong support in the classroom. The most able pupils have the opportunity to make progress through challenging extension activities across most year groups and in most subjects.
- 3.4 Pupils have well-rounded physical skills and as a result, achieve success, both individually and in teams. The wide range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to explore new interests and practise skills in many different physical disciplines. Pupils have ample opportunity to represent their school in a variety of competitive sports and achieve success at local, county and national levels. Swimming and cross-country running are particular strengths of the school, with pupils being proud to be selected to represent their school.
- 3.5 Pupils' creative ability is a strength of the school. In addition to producing artwork of a high level at all ages, pupils also enjoy performing in drama productions and music festivals. More than half of all pupils play musical instruments and many achieve merits and distinctions when taking external music examination grades.
- 3.6 Pupils' achievement is supported extremely well by their positive attitude to work and learning. They apply themselves enthusiastically when working collaboratively and individually in formal lessons. In a small number of less structured lessons, a minority of pupils exhibited low-level disruptive behaviour, which affected their concentration.
- 3.7 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 curriculum tests at the age of seven in 2011 were above the national average for maintained primary schools. Results in national curriculum tests at the age of 11 have been above the national average for maintained schools.

Results have improved from 2011-13, being above the national average for maintained primary schools in 2013.

- 3.8 This level of attainment, supported by curriculum interviews, the quality of the teaching and learning observed in lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and their positive response to a broad and balanced curriculum indicates that pupils make excellent progress relative to those with similar abilities. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress in relation to their needs, whilst the most able make similarly rapid progress.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular is excellent.
- 3.10 The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that challenges each pupil to engage and be an active learner. Collaborative learning activities form part of most lessons. The curriculum provides pupils with a firm foundation on which to eventually base their secondary school careers. The breadth and variety of the curriculum makes a significant contribution to the lives of the pupils at the school. Members of the teaching staff are active in seeking ways to constantly enhance the scope and positive impact of the curriculum in their pupils.
- 3.11 Combined with the strong extra-curricular programme, the curriculum supports the stated aims of the school well. Cross-curricular themes are used to great effect in most year groups.
- 3.12 The introduction of subject specialist teaching in Year 5 and above has assisted the pupils to develop their organisational skills whilst receiving specialist tuition in academic subjects. This helps ensure pupils departing at the end of Year 6 are well prepared for their senior schools of choice.
- 3.13 Pupils develop confidence in speaking and listening, and they have the opportunity to perform through a wide range of drama and music performances and assemblies, when pupils clearly enjoy speaking in front of an audience. Some pupils take qualifications accredited by the English Speaking Board. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas in lessons throughout the school. They are also encouraged to consider how their spoken responses and thoughts might be improved.
- 3.14 Lessons are planned effectively to include the needs of pupils of all abilities. More able pupils are clearly identified and are challenged across the curriculum. Likewise, pupils with SEND are well-catered for in each subject through targeted support from teaching assistants or by work carefully matched to their needs. Lessons are planned and executed with clear focus on the learning needs of all pupils including those with identified requirements for SEND support.
- 3.15 The curriculum is well planned and supports pupils' progress well. Curriculum leaders in some subjects are involved in reviewing policies and practice across the school and this is being developed in all areas of the curriculum. The use of ICT to enhance the curriculum is widespread.
- 3.16 The broad curriculum is supported by an annual cycle of trips that support learning across a number of topics. They include visit to historical sites such as Salisbury Cathedral, Windsor Castle and Neasden Mandir. The pupils also visit religious

buildings including the local church, a synagogue and a mosque, as well as attending music festivals and participating in a ski holiday.

- 3.17 Extra-curricular provision is excellent. The high number of clubs and activities available during the school week offers a significant breadth of experience during a stimulating and varied day. This extra-curricular provision fully supports the pupils' personal and social development. Clubs and activities are provided by the teaching staff as well as by a significant number of visiting experts. More than four-fifths of pupils attend more than one club a week. Nearly two-thirds attend more than three or more clubs a week. The extra-curricular provision offers a fair distribution of sporting and quieter, cultural activities.
- 3.18 Curricular links with the local and wider community include input from parents on vocation, visits to the local church and national charities, and visiting the local care-home to sing to residents at Christmas. Parents' and pupils' responses to the questionnaire reflect a very high level of satisfaction with the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Both pupils and their parents appreciate the significant effort the school invests in local links.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.19 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.20 Throughout the school, teaching is effective in promoting the pupils' progress and supports the aim of the school; to provide teaching of the highest standard, encouraging children to give of their best, and develop a love of learning within the taught and the wider curriculum. Almost all the teaching observed was at least good, with many examples of excellence. Excellent relationships, based on mutual respect, lead to a positive and co-operative working atmosphere. Teaching is based on a strong understanding of pupils' needs, with assistance quickly and sensitively offered.
- 3.21 Overall, teaching demonstrates strong subject knowledge. Lessons are planned in detail to make good use of resources, including electronic ones. A range of teaching styles are employed, which encourage the use of independent learning, co-operative group work, or problem solving tasks as appropriate. The 'Take One Picture' initiative, which is an annual picture-themed cross-curricular primary topic introduced by the National Gallery, formed the basis of many lessons observed during the time the inspectors were at school. Cross-curricular work was evident in many subjects, which included science, maths and music lessons. The extensive range of methods used in a Year 2 ICT lesson, for example, enabled pupils of all abilities to link the fruit seen in a similar picture by the same artist to the production of electricity using bananas, bongos and crocodile clips. In most lessons, teaching sets a brisk pace, challenges most pupils and encourages reflective contributions. For example, in a Year 4 religious education class, pupils discussed religious beliefs and the theory of evolution in Victorian times. Pupils generally show tolerance towards others who express views contrary to their own. In a small number of lessons, some pupils were seen to lose focus with the resultant low-level disruption hindering the progress of others.
- 3.22 Teaching is almost always successful in fostering pupils' keen interest. There was huge excitement in a Year 5 ICT lesson when the pupils were set to work on finding the distances travelled on journeys all over the world. All lessons had clear learning intentions accompanied by a range of success criteria to assist both marking and

self-review. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils expressed the view that homework does not help them learn; however, through pupil interviews and work scrutiny, inspectors found homework set acted to reinforce skills taught in lessons. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their lessons and how much they enjoy them.

- 3.23 The arrangements for pupils with SEND are excellent. For example, a pupil with SEND was fully supported during a science and mathematics lesson, but this was not needed in ICT, where he was among the more able and skilled pupils within the group. Teaching assistants are used very effectively throughout the school to provide support where needed. The provision of extension work for more able pupils is routine in some subjects, but this is not consistent practice across all lessons or teachers.
- 3.24 Marking is regular and often provides helpful comments to inform pupils of their progress. The school has a detailed and ambitious marking policy, which is only followed by some subjects in some year groups, resulting in an inconsistent approach. The best examples of marking provide detailed and focused comments that give advice to pupils on targets for improvement. In a minority of cases, encouraging comments are not accompanied by guidance for improvement and the marking is superficial or briefly summative. The standard of pupils' written work and general presentation, in the best cases seen, was excellent; however, this was seen to be inconsistent across subjects and year groups. The use of peer review amongst pupils fosters a high degree of personal development, enabling the pupils to understand the importance of both giving and receiving critique.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 This high standard fulfils the school's aims to foster a culture based on empathy, co-operation and respect for others, where individuality is valued and nurtured, and also to create a safe, caring and stimulating environment in which children develop the independence, confidence and self-discipline to make responsible decisions. Throughout the school, including during break times and free time, pupils' behaviour is good.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They have high levels of self-esteem and respect the beliefs and values of others. They are open in discussing matters of faith, developing a deeper knowledge of themselves. The pupils have opportunities to participate in music and drama productions, as well as study the natural world, and these experiences enhance pupils' sense of awe and wonder.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They show a keen sense of fairness, distinguishing easily between right and wrong. Their understanding of the need for rules and boundaries is grounded on a sense of mutual and collaborative responsibility. The eco council is currently building a greenhouse from recycled plastic bottles, brought in by pupils. Pupils also have the opportunity to contribute ideas to the range of activities and clubs offered, and this helps further develop pupils' self-esteem.
- 4.5 Year 6 pupils are extremely keen to accept roles of responsibility. They volunteer to support younger pupils by assisting in clubs and activities such as cookery and loom-band club, and join the 'Junior Road Safety' group to support the community police in addressing inconsiderate parking issues, contributing towards pupils' knowledge of English public institutions. The high quality of activities in which pupils are involved, both before and after school, helps them to recognise the importance of working supportively with each other. The new merit system promotes sporting and cultural competition, which the pupils very much enjoy. As a result, their social development is excellent.
- 4.6 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils have a strong appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures. In subjects such as religious education and languages, pupils consider their own cultures and those of others. The pupils' involvement in supporting charities promotes a wider awareness about life and culture at home and overseas, such as dressing up for World Book Day, sending pencil cases to disadvantaged children in the developing world, and singing carols at a local care home for the elderly. Through the work of the school council, pupils learn about democracy and fundamental British values such as fairness and respect for others.
- 4.7 The pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school. This is supported by their termly mentor review with their tutor or class teacher during their time at the school, and the provision for personal, social and health education in the 'learning for life' scheme, which is excellent overall.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.

- 4.9 The school successfully provides a caring environment for its pupils. A culture of care, kindness and mutual respect pervades it. Pupils are very proud to be members of the school and say how good their pastoral care is. Whilst a comprehensive structure exists to ensure the highest levels of pastoral care, it is evident that all members of staff take collective responsibility for pastoral issues. Pupils say they are confident that there are always adults available to them to speak to on any matter if they wish to
- 4.10 Efficient policies and procedures support effective pastoral care. All members of staff are familiar with the school's pastoral reporting and recording systems. Consistent care is evident throughout the school day. Any distressed or upset child is treated empathetically, efficiently and with high levels of kindness. Pastoral standards are maintained by an efficient, well-taught personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, together with assemblies and form tutor periods. In a Year 5 'learning for life' lesson, pupils learned about the effects of alcohol abuse on young people and their differing views were sensitively challenged by the teacher, encouraging the pupils to consider other points of view.
- 4.11 A small minority of responses to the pupils' and parents' questionnaires said that bullying was not dealt with effectively. In discussion with pupils, inspectors could find no evidence to support this view. The ethos of the school clearly encourages positive behaviour. Pupils report that incidents of bullying are rare and that they are confident that members of staff will attend to any such concerns swiftly and efficiently should they arise. They know how to ask for adult assistance at any time.
- 4.12 All members of staff know the pupils well and this, together with positive relationships, enable staff to plan activities to meet pupils' varying needs. Pupils engage well with the recently introduced merit system, although in the pupil questionnaire and during pupil interviews, they felt they were awarded inconsistently. Senior managers are aware of this and have plans to address the issue.
- 4.13 In assemblies, religious education and PSHE lessons, and around the school, pupils show their care of others, harmonious living and tolerance for all. In a year 3 lesson, pupils wrote ideas for perfect harmonious living on the petals of coloured paper lotus blossoms, whilst studying Buddhism.
- 4.14 Since the previous inspection, pupils now enjoy satisfactory hot school lunches. During interviews, pupils expressed a wish to see the daily choice of options expanded, including the availability of salad. They enjoy the healthy lunches, but particularly look forward to the pudding on Fridays!
- 4.15 The school council and the eco council give pupils an opportunity to express their views and encourage an awareness of how change can be achieved. Their input has seen the lunch system improved and a greenhouse is being constructed from plastic bottles.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 These arrangements support fully the aims of the school and contribute effectively to pupils' well-being and safety. The school has robust procedures and practice for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. Safeguarding arrangements have due regard to official guidance and are implemented by all members of the school community. Staffs are fully trained in safeguarding and thus aware of their

responsibility for child protection. The school has appropriate links with the local safeguarding board. The school is audited thoroughly each year by the proprietors. The school has proper procedures for recruiting staff. The school's 'learning for life' scheme promotes pupils' emotional well-being effectively. Pupils also learn about e-safety and the importance of Internet protocols when using digital technology.

- 4.18 The school has robust procedures for reducing and managing the risks from fire. Playground equipment is inspected annually. Risk-assessments are carried out for areas of school life, including for off-site visits. Arrangements for sick pupils and those with SEND are well managed by qualified nursing staff, housed in a satisfactory medical room.
- 4.19 Admission and attendance registers, which contain the required information, are suitably maintained and stored for the statutory three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body consists of a small group of professional directors and consultants, employed by the proprietor, who share considerable educational experience and have effective strategic overview of the school's work. They offer support and rigorous challenge to the school's leadership. This is realised through improvements in the school's buildings, planning and in the quality of outcomes for pupils.
- 5.3 The governors have a clear vision for the success of Gateway School to ensure that its aims are fully met, and the ethos of the school pervades its work. Robust systems ensure governors are knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's work and life. Their strategic oversight is informed by a thorough bi-annual whole school review, which includes interviews with staff and pupils, paired-lesson observation moderation, work scrutiny and a parental questionnaire. This process, carried out in consultation with the head, results in a school improvement plan that helps to drive the development of the school forward.
- 5.4 Recommendations in the previous inspection report to develop the school's leadership and management team have been addressed, and the school now serves a cooked lunch to the pupils each day.
- 5.5 In addition to the bi-annual whole school review, there is a cycle of annual visits from the governors, with a different school focus each term. The head attends meetings of the board, along with other heads in the Bellevue cluster group, to discuss school development priorities and to share good practice with heads from across the group. There is a formal appraisal system in place for the head, where personal and professional targets are measured against the school improvement plan. Governors ensure the school is fully compliant with current statutory guidance, including safeguarding.

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 good.
- 5.7 The management structure has a strong, cohesive framework. This enables senior leaders to provide a clear sense of direction, successful both in achieving the aims of the school, and in promoting the pupils' excellent achievement and personal development. The hard-working members of the management team show a high degree of commitment and enthusiasm in their many individual responsibilities, implementing well-considered policies. Policies are devised by either the governors or the staff and in both cases are regularly reviewed. Appropriate systems ensure the welfare, health and safeguarding of pupils so that they are safe and well-cared for.
- 5.8 Leadership roles have been clarified and this has identified the need to further strengthen and expand these roles within the school. Senior managers provide a

clear educational direction to equip their pupils with a firm foundation for learning and for the acquisition of life-skills beyond the classroom. Those subject leaders who are well established are aware of areas of strength and those for development, sharing their knowledge and expertise both with their own staff and other Bellevue schools. Subject leaders who are newer in post are currently engaged in refining the curriculum and developing subject resources.

- 5.9 Rigorous assessment systems in mathematics and English ensure frequent tracking of pupils' academic progress. In these subjects, subject leaders monitor pupils' work and progress thoroughly through observation, the analysis of test results and the scrutiny of work, but this is not done consistently across the curriculum.
- 5.10 The appointment of pastoral leaders responsible for the oversight of specific year groups and the needs of individual pupils ensures a clear overview of provision for their personal development.
- 5.11 The school has a strong link with The Institute of Education, London University, and provides placements and mentoring support to PGCE students. It also has a strong association with the Local Authority, Bucks County Council where any NQTs at the school receive accreditation and additional inset training.
- 5.12 The management's development plan sets realistic priorities within the limitations of the site. Responses from the biennial questionnaire to parents are considered when formulating areas for development. These plans, which match educational needs to the setting effectively, are regularly reviewed and developed to improve the pupils' day-to-day experience. For example, new classrooms have recently been built to provide better accommodation for Senior pupils, whilst the use of ICT is well embedded throughout the school.
- 5.13 Great care is taken to select good quality staff and all the required procedures for assessing their suitability are in place. Senior managers regularly update training procedures and careful induction ensures that all staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. Clear handbooks inform them about the school's aims, procedures and expectations. The introduction of a more thorough appraisal system is playing a significant role in identifying requirements for further professional development and training.
- 5.14 The support staff are well motivated and demonstrate a clear commitment to the school. Both teachers and support assistants are well deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress. There is comprehensive liaison between staff to ensure smooth transitions between Years 2 and 3, and between Years 4 and 5 reflecting changes in the approach to education. The school supports pupils leaving at the end of Year 6, by secondary school heads or senior staff visiting the Year 6 pupils prior to them starting secondary school to talk to both the pupils and their parents.
- 5.15 The school has excellent relations with the parents, carers and guardians and meets its stated aim to communicate effectively with parents to support each child's development. Should a parent have a concern, it is handled with care and in accordance with the school's published policy.
- 5.16 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents were overwhelmingly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. A minority of parents felt that they were not given sufficient information about their child's progress, that very able pupils do not receive appropriate support or were

unhappy about the way in which the school deals with bullying. However, in meetings during the inspection, parents were pleased with all aspects of communication and with the way in which the school handles any concerns. In addition to day-to-day informal contact, formal consultation evenings take place 2 times a year. The teachers have regular mentoring sessions with each individual child, and copies of minutes of these interviews are sent to and discussed with the parents. At the end of the summer term, parents receive a detailed written report. In this way parents are kept well informed of their child's current attainment and apprised of any areas of difficulty. Parents meet their child's teacher at the start of the academic year to discuss routines and expectations. Parents of older pupils are offered helpful meetings to discuss appropriate options for senior education. Evidence gathered during the course of the inspection confirmed that able pupils are appropriately challenged. Any instances of bullying are dealt with in a timely manner and in accordance with the school's protocols.

- 5.17 Parents made comment on the high standards of behaviour and academic progress their child makes. Before joining Gateway, parents receive helpful, detailed information, including all that is required, through the school's website, parent handbooks and meetings with staff. Taster days provide children with the opportunity to become familiar with the school environment and to meet their teachers and peers.
- 5.18 The head teacher's blog and a weekly newsletter include details of significant events and achievements, with each year group contributing a resume of their week's work as well as ways in which parents can support their child's learning.
- 5.19 Throughout the school, parents enjoy the opportunity to be actively involved in the work and progress of their child, both in academic and extra-curricular aspects of their day. Parents are regularly invited to school events, lend their expertise, cultural family customs and accompany school trips. A well-supported friends association arranges fundraising and social events for both the school and charities.

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. Rigorously planned educational programmes ensure the individual needs and interests of all children are met through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which provide the children with opportunities to play and explore, to develop core skills, to think creatively and to solve problems. Staff know the children extremely well and make effective use of observations and assessments to challenge and support them, whatever their abilities and needs. By the end of Reception, all children achieve at least their expected levels of attainment, with a significant number exceeding them. Planning at all levels reflects the children's changing needs as they move through the EYFS. In Nursery, the bright, spacious indoor accommodation allows children to make wide-ranging choices in their child-initiated learning, whilst reception staff make effective use of their more limited indoor space to provide stimulating activities and experiences.
- 6.2 Specialist staff have an excellent understanding of teaching and learning and provide enriching experiences and opportunities in specific areas of the curriculum. During an art lesson, all children enjoyed mixing paint as they explored tones of green to create a detailed painting of a leaf.
- 6.3 Early Years parents were overwhelmingly positive in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires and this was reinforced at meetings during the course of the inspection. Parents feel welcomed into the school and appreciate the 'open door' policy, the approachability of staff and effective communication, including prior to their child joining the setting. They are well informed about their child's progress and achievements through daily contact, home/school communication books, annual written reports and termly meetings.

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

- 6.4 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well being is outstanding.
- 6.5 The key person system is firmly established with all staff meeting the needs of the children and contributing to their care. Priority is given to promoting high standards of behaviour and respect for each other. Daily routines ensure the children feel secure. Children play cooperatively, sharing resources with considerable maturity. They readily ask an adult for help when needed and confidently discuss their concerns. As children progress through the EYFS, they are encouraged to become increasingly independent. Nursery children competently put on their coats and change their shoes before going outside. In the reception year, children manage their personal hygiene, change their clothes quickly and efficiently for PE lessons and take responsibility for their own belongings and shared resources. Liaison between year groups across the school is strong resulting in children being thoroughly prepared for the transition to the next stage of their education.
- 6.6 Healthy eating is promoted in circle and discussion times as well as when children are eating their lunch and snacks. They understand which foods are good for them

and which are treats. However, the development of specific personal and social skills is not fully exploited at these times. Staff take spontaneous opportunities to draw attention to the effect of exercise on the body, and reception children enjoy PE and games lessons with specialist staff, with after school clubs providing additional sporting opportunities.

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

- 6.7 Leadership and management of the early years provision are outstanding.
- 6.8 The governors provide highly effective support for the EYFS with one governor having specific responsibility for early years issues and offering valuable support to staff.
- 6.9 Senior managers are fully aware of their responsibilities and ensure that the educational programmes are effectively delivered and evaluated. Children are extremely well cared for and robust systems are in place to monitor policies and procedures, thus safeguarding children and protecting their welfare. All staff receive appropriate induction training when they join the school, maintained through appropriate in-service training, including supervision, local authority courses and cluster group meetings.
- 6.10 Reflective practice is a strength of the setting and forms the basis of all aspects of curriculum planning, as well as the vision for the future of the EYFS. A detailed development plan identifies areas for action and assigns responsibilities together with timescales, success criteria, outcomes for learners and financial implications.
- 6.11 The school works closely with parents and external agencies to ensure that appropriate help and support is given to children with additional specific learning needs.

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

- 6.12 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding.
- 6.13 Children are enthusiastic in their approach to all aspects of learning. They arrive at school cheerfully each morning, separating readily from parents and carers, and are eager to begin the day. All children, including those with SEND, make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. By the end of the reception year, the more able children are reading with considerable fluency and writing in sentences using their excellent phonic knowledge and basic punctuation. They recognise and confidently manipulate numbers to 20 and beyond, and they have well developed concepts of the value of coins. Many children in nursery have secure knowledge of initial sounds and read and write their name as well as simple words. They are familiar with numbers to ten and show an interest in clocks and telling the time. They confidently use French vocabulary, responding to greetings and questions with enthusiasm and understanding.
- 6.14 The recommendation in the previous inspection report to ensure that daily planning for both indoor and outdoor provision is clearly recorded and includes provision for all children, has been addressed. Staff have revised planning procedures to include children's individual needs and interests and to take their next steps into account.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

6.15 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.